

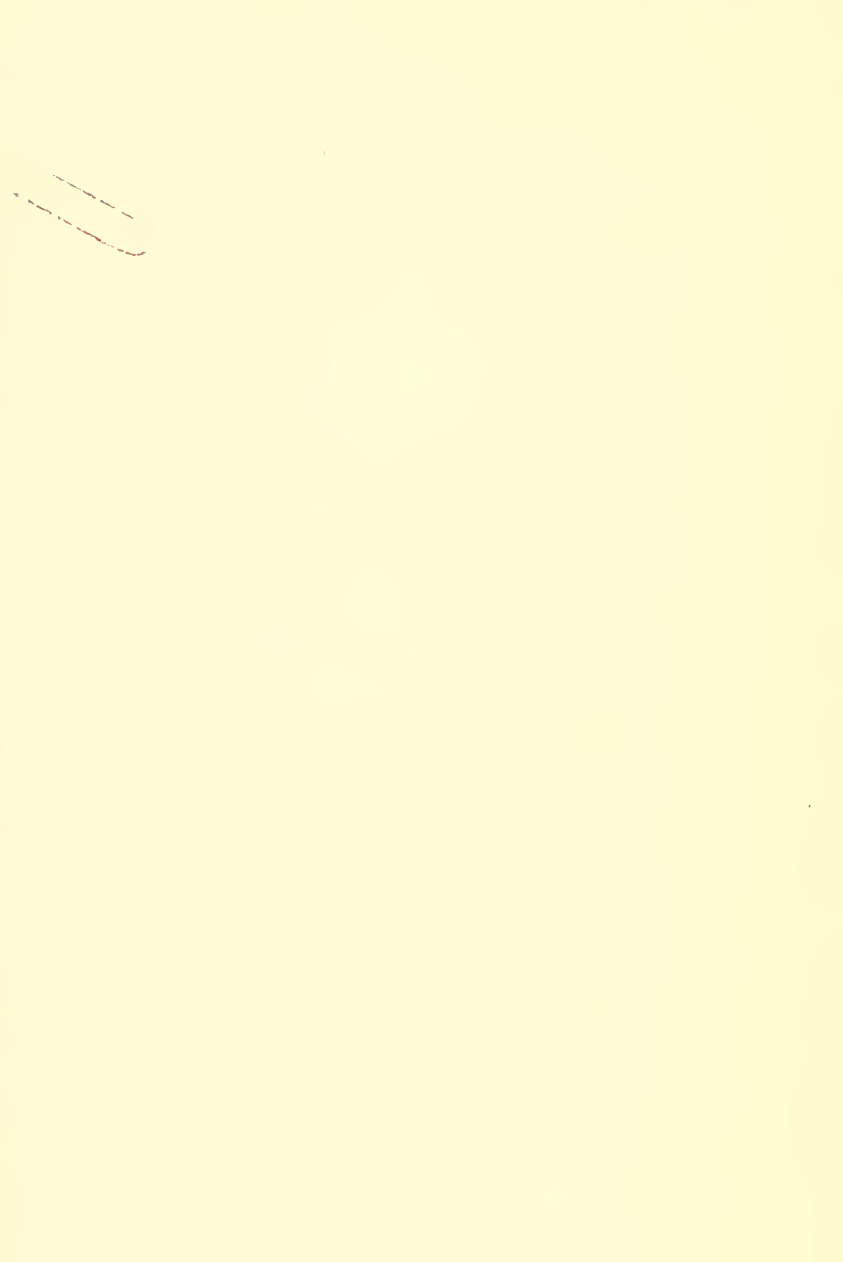
THERE'S NO BASE
LIKE HOME
H.C. WITWER



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THERE'S NO BASE
LIKE HOME



ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

“Mrs. Bloom says I am the luckiest guy in the world to have a wife like Jeanne—and if I bust it all up now, I am a bigger boob than she thought I was.”

THERE'S NO BASE LIKE HOME

BY
H. C. WITWER



ILLUSTRATED
BY
ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

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“Dedicated in gratitude to
CHARLES AGNEW MACLEAN,
a *beaucoup* editor and a
beaucoup guy!”

—H. C. W.

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THERE'S NO BASE
LIKE HOME

CHAPTER I

THERE'S NO BASE LIKE HOME

FIRST INNING

Alongside of the Hudson's River, N. Y.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, we have got off to a start as you have prob'ly no doubt seen by the papers and win the first game of the season by trimmin' the Robins with the ridiculous ease. Even if the thing did go sixteen innin's and the score was only 1 to 0 and we got that run in the last frame by way of a wild pitch, that's the same as if we win by 749 to 0, because we win it and that's all that counts, hey, Joe? Them guys got eleven hits off of me and you can see I must of got terrible support or that never would of happened. If it wasn't for my almost unhuman control in the pinches and makin' the batter act like a armless wonder when they was a runner on the base, we would prob'ly of lost the game, because whenever they was a ball hit to the infield them birds all acted like it was against the law to touch it and it made the game more interestin' to have the bases loaded.

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I was give a great reception, Joe, when I strolled out to the box in a nonchalantly way and waved my cap right and left to my 25,000 to 30,000 frantic followers and I bet if even Pres. Wilson had walked across the field right then he would of attracted no more attention than a drop of water at Niagara Falls. They was manys the loud cry for a speech and I got all set right in front of the boxes to let one forth when Mac grabs me by the arm and says this is gonna be a ball game and not a banquet and I had better go back to the bull pen and warm up so's the Robins wouldn't get no more than half a dozen hits each off of me.

“Listen!” I says. “You wanna remember this here will be the first real game I pitched for nearly two years and if them guys *does* luck themselves into a run or so, don't blame it on me. I always was a slow starter anyways.”

“You said it!” says Mac, with a sarcaistical sneer. “It used to generally be the first week in December before you got goin' at all and what good is a inshoot then?”

Joe, can you tie that? This bird would find fault with a ten thousand dollar bill, hey?

Well, yesterday mornin' I am up in my flat, Joe, engaged in the innocent pastime of playin' with my baby whilst Jeanne looks on with a lovin' smile on her equally lovin' face and a book by the name of

"The Whole English Language in One Lesson" in her hand, when they's a ring at the bell. Our imported maid from Yonkers trips lightly over a rug into the room and exclaims that they's a guy outside by the name of Mac which wishes nothin' better than to see me. I give permission for him to come in.

"Well, well," he says, lettin' forth a grin. "The happy family, hey? How is everybody this mornin'?"

"What's the use of kickin'?" I says. "What d'ye think of my child?"

"Fine!" says Mac. "What is it?"

"What d'ye mean what is it?" I hollers. "It's a baby—what did you think it was, a giraffe?"

"I mean is it a boy or a girl," says Mac. "Save that comedy for the club house."

"It's a boy," I says. "Some kid, hey?"

"I'll say he is!" says Mac, approachin' carefully like he was afraid my baby was gonna bite him or the like. "Looks just like his mother, too. Get them navy blue eyes, eh?"

"Never mind tryin' to get in solid with the wife!" I says, whilst Jeanne presents him with a dazzlin' smile. "D'ye wanna hold him a minute?"

"Well—eh—let's start with somethin' else," says Mac, backin' away. "He seems all right where he is, I'll let that part of it go for awhile, hey?"

"Cheri, say *bon jour* to Monsieur Mac!" remarks Jeanne to my baby.

"Ump goof waugh gunko!" returns my baby, with a sarcastical grin.

"Don't mention it," says Mac. "Say—that kid's a wonder! Talks as plain as I do. How old is it by now?"

"What's the difference?" I says. "Did you wanna see me about somethin'?"

"Yeh," says Mac. "Put on your hat and coat."

"I ain't drinkin' a thing," I says. "And——"

"I want you to come out to the park with me for about a hour," he interrupts. "I have got hold of a bird which I can buy cheap from Buffalo and I gotta get him quick if at all. I wanna short flash at him at work—he's gotta be back there to-night. Of course, I won't have much time to see whether he's worth a cigar coupon or a fistful of diamonds, but if he shows me anything at all, I'm gonna take him along. He's a infielder by nationality and maybe I can put him on second next year instead of Watson."

"What are you gonna do with Watson?" I says. "I thought he was the same to the club as the franchise."

"He's slippin' fast," says Mac. "He's commen-cin' to field like they was lovin' cups give to the guy which made the most errors a game and he

ain't hit nothin' but four fouls since he come down to the trainin' camp. They's a good livin' in one of them little cigar stores or the like—that's up to him!"

Joe, ain't that tough? As soon as a guy begins to show the first signs of wear they start greasin' up the old skids for him. Such is life in baseball, hey, Joe? To-day you're a knockout, to-morrow you're a tramp! If you rap out a triple, the mob is willin' to elect you mayor—if you fan the next time up, the bleachers turns into a coupla thousand would be murderers. Joe, wouldn't it be awfully if I begin to slip and let clubs like the Cards trim me? I often wish now that I had took up the delicatessen game or the movies or the like for a livin' and not have to caper around a lot all day for money like a idiot, hey, Joe?

Well, anyways, me and Mac climbed aboard my new auto which I now drive the same as Barney Oldfield—as good, but not as fast—and outside of one traffic cop givin' me a five minute lecture on the subject of "Keep To the Right!" and a motorcycle cop showin' unusual curiosity regardin' the reason why my motor was smokin', we got out to the park O. K. They was three or four of the gang there and also this here find of the season which was in uneyform. Joe, he was as big as Willard, with one of them fat, good natured faces

which a bartender was supposed to have, but I only seen one like that in my life and he was the guy which owned the place. Well, Joe, Mac calls him over.

"This here's Ed. Harmon," he says to him. "What did you claim your name was?"

"Ike Rosconovitzman," he says, grinnin' like a wolf, and shovin' out a paw as big as South Dakota. "Well, natural I'm glad I should shake hands from Harmon, which who don't heard tell of him?"

"That Rosconovitzman thing has got to go," says Mac. "It's too long! How could we ever get a trade mark like that into a box score? If you work for me we'll call you Ike Ross and let it go at that, get me!"

"I should change my name!" says Ike. "What am I—a actor *oder* a ball player?"

"I don't know," says Mac. "We'll get that all settled in a minute! Let's see how you and a bat get along."

Well, Joe, Smith gets on a glove and goes back of the plate and I took off my coat and vest and went out to the box. Ike Ross, nee Rosconovitzman, grabs up a bat and steps over to the plate.

"*Gevhalt!*" he says. "Only shoot it over and I'll murder it the ball!"

Joe, it kinda peeved me a trifle that this here

busher with the trick name and the Joe Welsh dialect should cast a reflection on my world wide reputation as a mound artist, as the young reporters says, so before I wound up I looked him over with that deadly cold gaze of mine which has quailed and flinched so many.

"I hate to send you back to the sticks, busher," I says, "but if you lay a bat on this pill I'll shine your shoes in front of the city hall at three o'clock to-morrow afternoon!"

"Make it half past two," he says, rubbin' his hands in the dirt, "and you could believe it, I'll be there! If you could make me fan, I could make it a locomotive—not that you ain't *some* pitchers. Maybe the first one I would miss on account from being a little cold, but Oy!—what I'll do to the rest of them! This here's a big chance for me, Mister Harmon. I got it a chance I should get in the big's league. It's next to the biggest thing which it ever happened from me in my life. I should miss it, hey? Say—I'm laughin' at you!"

"What was the *biggest* thing that ever happened to you?" Mac asks him, grinnin' at me.

Ike rubs his chin a minute.

"Well," he says, "off the hand, it's quite a question to answer. Still, I think that the biggest thing which it ever happened from me was the day I was born!"

The gang gives Mac the laugh and I shot over a fast one whilst Ike was lookin' at him. He merely sneered at it and Mac hollers for him to take his bat off his shoulder and not act like he was carryin' a gun and if he did think he was to at least come to present arms with it. I eased over another one and Ike missed it from here to St. Paul. I put the third ball under his chin, Joe, and he swung at it so hard that he spin around like a top a coupla times and wound up sittin' on the plate.

"Oh, boy!" bawls Mac, holdin' his nose. "Who laid me on this guy? Bean him with the next one, Harmon, and I'll send him back to Buffalo on a shutter!"

"What is this—Russia?" says Ike, gettin' up and dustin' off his unction. "Couldn't a man get it a chance here? Suppose I should miss, now, two of them? That first one was a ball and I got one strike left, *na?* That makes no matter from me. Now—say they is a man on first, a man on second, a man on third, a man on—well, that's enough! I'm at the bat's. One strike I got left. If I should rap it out a hit now, the least I bring in is a run, *na?*"

"Yeh," says Mac, "and if I had Morgan's bank-roll the least I would be is a millionaire. You got the same chance of gettin' a hit on the next ball as I have of bein' elected chief of police in Bulgaria.

Take off that uneyform and exchange it for the gate. How I ever fell for you is past me!"

"A minute!" says Ike. "The contract was I should have it a hour to show what I got. Fair is fair and right is right, *na?* A man's word is the same like his bond. Do with the others like you want they should do from you. Don't kick a man which he's down! Nobody's perfect! Forgive and forget! A man which——"

"Half a loaf's better than a charlotte russe!" hollers Mac, dancin' around him. "A rollin' stone's liable to hit somebody! A stitch in time saves buyin' a new suit!" He runs over and grabs the bat off of Ike. "Shut up!" he bawls. "What d'ye mean by pullin' that stuff on me? I'll give you exactly a half hour more to show me you ever seen a ball park before you come here to-day and if you ain't a riot, I'll knock you kickin' with a bat for wastin' my time. Now go to it and show *me!*"

Ike grins and reaches for another bat.

"Fair enough!" he says. "Oy—what I could do it in half a hour! Why would you believe it, Mister Mac, only the other night I win five dollars in half a hour from some friends playin' ten cent draw poker!"

"You win five dollars in ten cent draw, eh?" sneers Mac. "Well, you must of drawed a *gun*

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on them guys! C'mon Harmon, let him have it."

Well, Joe, I let Ike have it and to show they was no hard feelin's he let *me* have it too! You never seen such a change come over anything in your life, not even the German army, as the one that took place with this Ike guy. I felt kinda sorry for the poor hick at first, because he sure looked pitiful standin' there without a friend and the gang ridin' him to a fare-thee-well. Well, I thought, I'll ease one over so's he can make *some* kind of a showin' before he gets the gate and with that, Joe, I shot him one right in the groove. Joe, he put it up against the tobacco sign in right field and the bunch begins to ride *me*. I figure by this time I have done all for him that he can expect, so I feed him my world famous slow drop next and he lays it in the left field bleachers. Joe, I am gettin' sore and I give that baby everything I got in stock from that wicked inshoot of mine to my notorious wiggler, which is as fast as a frightened bullet and twists like a epileptic snake. Joe, he eat 'em all up, fillin' the air full of baseballs and Mac give a sarcastical grunt and asks me are we room-mates. He even put a wild pitch up against the flagpole in deep centre and Smith, which was catchin' me, never laid a finger on the ball because none of them got that far. When he slammed my lightnin' out-

shoot so hard that it must of come down in Russia for the first bounce, I throwed off my glove and quit and Mac tells him to go out on the lot with the rest of the gang and show him a piece of fieldin'.

Joe, that bird would never of hit me as hard as that if I had of been in my baseball uneyform instead of merely standin' there in citizen's life clothes, because I am what they call a artist and cannot pitch my best unless everything is just so so and besides they was no crowd there cheerin' me on or yellin' for me to be took out of the box one or the other and that slowed me up too. Any guy which is what they call a artist, Joe, can tell you the samething. They is a thing which is knowed among us great men as temperamental and I was took with a sudden stroke of it or that guy would never of laid his bat within' telephone distance of the ball.

Well, Joe, we all took turns rappin' out balls to him in the field and if he was good with the old wagon tongue, he was a fiend when it come to fieldin'. He was faster on his feet than a rabbit, and as for a throwin' arm—Oh, boy! Joe, he snapped one from second to me and I thought they was a motor in it from the way it sounded goin' past my ear. Before I could raise a glove to it, it was bouncin' off the side of the dugout. Mac sent in some other guys to work out with him so's he wouldn't feel lonesome and as far as fieldin'

was concerned them guys could of started a crap game, because Ike never give them a chance. He covered more ground than the prohibition movement and if Ty Cobb could of seen this bird work he would of gone to the nearest drug store and took a seidel of arsenic from plain jealousy. Joe, he missed a odd one now and then or he would of been unhuman, but he give a exhibition of the game of baseball all by himself out there that would make Eddie Collins look like a busher.

"This guy's a gold mine!" Mac whispers to me. "He'll be the talk of the country in a coupla weeks and so will I for diggin' him up. Why they won't be nothin' | on the front page of the papers but his pictures and the like and they'll run what's happenin' in the rest of the world in the advertisin' section. He's got Watson's job sewed in the linin' of his vest now and I only hope he won't ask for a cut of the Liberty Loan to go to work for me. If I got to do it though, I'll give him the club house and the grandstand to get him to try out a fountain pen on the bottom of a contract!"

With that he yells for Ike to come in.

"C'mere!" says Mac, when Ike come grinnin' up to the plate, "and take that simp look off your face whilst I'm talkin' to you. I must say I'm a whole lot disappointed after seein' you work. I thought you had some big league stuff in you,

but you got manys the year to go yet on what you've showed to-day. You small time knockouts are all alike—world beaters with the high school boys and tramps when you get in the Big Show. However, I'll give you a chance, but you got to improve 500 per cent. over your present work. I counted all the balls hit to you and out of thirty-six chances you missed two—that's terrible! The only reason you got a hit at all off of Harmon was because I told him not to extend himself and take chances of hurtin' his arm. If he had really let himself out you would never of put wood on the ball, get that?"

"What else is the matter from me?" says Ike, scratchin' his head.

"I'll leave the bleachers tell you all about that the first time you work," says Mac. "How much dough do you think you oughta get?"

"Well," says Ike, "that's a question. How's business?"

"How's business?" hollers Mac. "Say—how long have you been playin' professional baseball anyways?"

"*Gevhalt!*" says Ike. "You should live that long! I want only I should save enough money to open it a delicatessen and then I wouldn't care if I never seen a umpire even for the rest of my life." He begins waggin' his head from one side to the

other. "*Tsch!*" he says. "Baseballs—that's a business! Strike one, strike two, he's out, he's safe, batters up, ball six, leave him in, take him out, kill the umpire, Oy!"

Me and Mac is havin' trouble with a bad case of the hystericals and fin'ly Mac demands to know at once how much money Ike wants and be done with it.

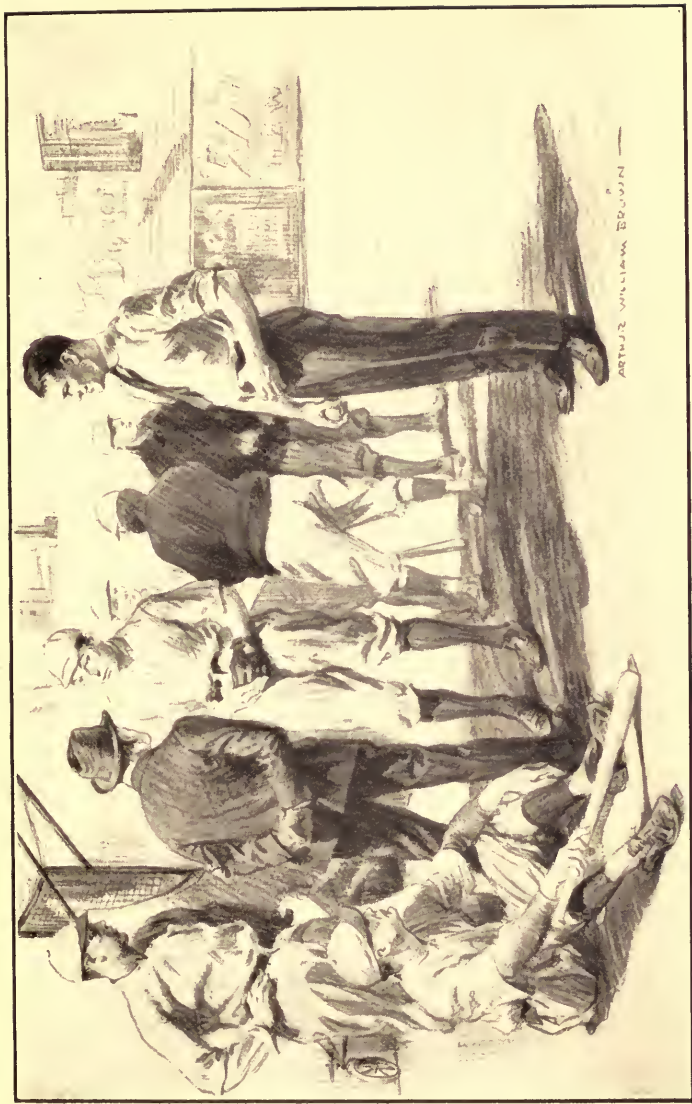
"Well," says Ike, "so's we wouldn't waste all day with fighting and like that—how's six thousand a year?"

"That's nice money," says Mac, "and I bet Rockefeller and Morgan hit around that practically year in and year out. I'll split the difference with you and make it two thousand. C'mon down to the office and I'll sign you up before I change my mind."

"Oy!" hollers Ike, speakin' to the flagpole. "Two thousand a year? I'm laughing at you! A conductor from a street car gets two thousand a year and first crack at the nickels and you want I should play baseballs for that, hey? Either I get it six thousand or I go back to Buffaloes—you could take it or leave it!"

"All right," says Mac, turnin' away, "I'll leave it. So long, Stupid!"

We got about three feet away, Joe, when Ike comes runnin' and grabs Mac by the arm.



“I counted all the balls hit to you, and out of thirty-six chances you missed two”

"Gimme it the papers," he says, "I'll sign 'em. You could take a joke, couldn't you?"

Well, Joe, we got this here world beater for about the same money the ground keeper gets and I only hope he don't turn out to be a flash of the pan. Mac had a lotta fun gettin' his release from Buffalo which must of seen a rat when he went after Ike, because we had to give seven thousand dollars and two good outfielders to get this two-thousand-a-year champ.

Well, *bonne nuit*, as we used to remark in the trenches and I hope things is goin' O. K. with you. I don't work again for three days and then I pitch the first game against the Phillies. The only one of them guys which will see first base will be the bird which is playin' that position for them, hey, Joe?

Outa common politeness, Jeanne sends her love.

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (The Extry-ordinary pitcher de luxe).

On board the Amacassett.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, I suppose you will think I have went to sea again on account of the name at the top of this letter, but such is not the case. I am sittin' at my ease in a Pullman and that's all Rockefeller

could do, hey? It is called the Amacassett which sounds like one of them golf links, but it is as easy ridin' as a limousine and you would never know you was on a railroad train if it wasn't for the engineer blowin' the whistle from the time to time, prob'ly to let the conductor know he is still on the job. Right across from me is no less than Jeanne and my baby and I gotta stand for a lot of kiddin' on account of draggin' them all over the country with me, but Joe, I would just as soon leave my pitchin' arm home whilst I'm away as leave them. What good is it to get married and then become a globe trotter for half the year without even a flash at your family except through the mails, hey, Joe? Besides, Jeanne claimed she would leave me flat and go back to France if I didn't bring her along so what can a man do?

Well, Mac double crossed me and sent me in against the Robins in the last game, Joe, after promisin' he wouldn't use me 'til we got to Philly. I had been up half the night before bein' unable to sleep 'til I got four aces or the like and Joe, the rest of the club acted like *they* had been up *all* night, from the first innin' on. Well, Joe, the result was that the Robins went crazy in the seventh innin' and they didn't have nothin' on me because I blowed up like a ammunition foundry and everybody on the Brooklyn team got a hit but the owner

and the guys in the press box. When the smoke cleared away they had hammered me for six runs and I seen the rest of the game from the dugout.

Joe, Mac sent in Ike Ross to pinch hit for me in the eighth with a runner on first and third and that baby whaled the first thing offered for his inspection into the bleachers, turnin' in the only three runs we got. From then on the game was a I. W. W. affair with nothin' but strikes as far as we was concerned and we drop it, 6 to 3. Tough, hey?

Mac didn't have much to say about it, Joe, prob'ly because he knows I won't stand for no pannin' no more since I have become famous. He only remarks that a few more blow-ups like that and I will be sayin' "So this is Mobile?" or some place like that.

"Forget about it," I says. "A off day will befall the best of us. Napoleon come out second a coupla times, didn't he? Anyways, we got all season yet and losin' one game ain't gonna take the pennant away from us."

"No?" sneers Mac. "Well, losin' one game a day will do it!"

Can you tie that bird, Joe? He's there with a answer to everything!

Well, Joe, speakin' of this Ike Ross guy, they was a queer thing happened which I am goin' to

tell you about and which shows that it takes a long time to get a line on anything or anybody by appearances and then the chances are you are wrong.

Ike is solid with the gang now, Joe, but when he first joined the club he was about as welcome as rheumatism to a clog dancer. They was quite a few reasons for this, some of which Ike caused himself and some of which he didn't. Naturally, Joe, the guy which led the offensive against Ike was no less than Watson, which knowed Ike was gonna get his job and liked him accordin'ly. The things that baby put over on Ike would of made anybody on earth quit—but Ike. They wasn't a minute of the day that Watson wasn't tryin' out somethin' new to grab Ike's goat, but with all of that he was about as successful as if he was Congress and tryin' to argy with Wilson. No matter what come off, Ike would just grin and let it go at that and pretty soon they was few guys connected with the club that didn't think Ike was yellah. Joe, even the rubbers used to play tricks on Ike and get away with it.

He was on the job every day, Joe, playin' his usual gilt edged game whenever Mac would send him in and I know two games that this baby pulled outa the fire and sewed up for us by slammin' the pill into the stands when they was runners on

the bags. As soon as work was over for the day he beat it to his room at the hotel and nobody ever seen him 'til the next afternoon.

Joe, Ike was in a funny position. They was somethin' like twenty thousand fans which went crazy over him every afternoon and yet that bird didn't have one friend to his name! I bet he'd of give all them cheers from bankers, judges, actors, wealthy millionaires and etc. for a handshake from a boot-black. Mac would of parted with his right eye with the same willin'ness that he would of give up Ike, yet he never said a pleasant word to him and the rest of the gang was worse. I never seen him spend a dime and he'd argy all day over a nickel, but when we give the Red's Cross five bucks apiece, Ike come through with twenty-five. He always had a roll on him which would choke a whole stable full of horses and it wasn't long before everybody on the club owed him dough. He'd lend anybody anything—at ten per cent interest and a promissory note that the U. S. Supreme Court couldn't bust, for security.

Joe, they is no quicker way on earth to lose a friend than to lend him money. A guy may forgive you for stealin' his girl, but if he owes you some dough and can't pay it he's off of you for life. He may get sore for a minute if you turn him down, but if you let him have it and he can't

make good right away, he'll roast you to his dyin' day! Therefore, the whole club got to like Ike and influenza the same way and they wasn't nothin' them guys didn't try to make him jump the club. They tried to take him in a poker game, even dopin' out a system of signals to flash each other so's he'd have the same chance of quittin' winner as a armless wonder at a billiard tourney and they pleaded with Ike two days before he'd even play. They made it a five buck limit and played from seven one night to ten the next mornin'. Ike quit with seven hundred bucks in cash, three watches, a scarf pin and a coupla I. O. U.'s for a hundred berries each. Well, Joe, I'll let you figure how solid *that* made him.

Joe, I felt awful sorry for Ike, because he wasn't a bad guy at all when you got to know him. Besides that, he come near bein' the boss ball player I'd ever seen and a guy which is at the head of any game he's in, I don't care if it's street cleanin', is a knockout to me! Well, I had half a dozen little talks with him, bein' the only guy on the club which would mix with him at all, and one night I asked him to come up and have chow with me. Joe, you never seen a guy so grateful in all your life. First he gets white and then he gets red and then he says am I kiddin' and when I says no I thought he was gonna kiss me! He says all

right he'll be there and don't let the wife go to no trouble for him unless maybe a steak with onions or the like and am I sure it will be all right with her to bring him up and tell her she can look forward to gettin' some ice cream. Joe, it was really pitifully to see how thankful this guy was and I asked him if they is anything special he likes to eat outside of that steak and we'll have it and he says anything is all right and it don't have to be special.

Well, Joe, about seven o'clock that night Ike comes up and when I went to the door personally on account of the maid bein' off, I didn't know him. Joe, he's got on a dress suit which he told me afterwards he hired and he has got himself shaved to the bone with his hair slicked back like a rabbit's and all in all he's dressed up like the city hall durin' a Elks convention. He's got a big package under his arm which he claims is for the wife, and it turned out to be ten pounds of a candy which costs about the same a pound as radium and when he give it to Jeanne I thought she was gonna smile him to death. Well, Joe, the minute he gets a flash at my baby he drops everything, picks him up and begins sayin' somethin' in a unknown language to him and I was waitin' to hear my baby yell murder, but instead of that what does he do but commence to giggle and play with Ike's hair, a thing he never done before with no stranger. Joe,

in ten minutes they are havin' the time of their lives if you could judge by the laughs they're handin' each other. On the level, Ike refused to drop my baby 'til his supper got cold and Jeanne tells me eighty-seven times by official count what a fine *homme* he is and when he does sit down he keeps lookin' at her across the table 'til I got to remind him we have sit down to eat.

Well, Joe, after dinner it was quite a feat to separate Ike and my baby which is playin' on the floor and my baby yells for the cops when he is took away from this guy and put to bed. Then Ike pins four napkins over his open face suit and won't have it no other way but he'll go into the kitchen and wipe the dishes on account of the maid bein' off and Jeanne says afterwards she wished he was our maid because he had the one we got lashed to the mast.

I fin'ly managed to drag him away, Joe, from the household duties and we sit down in the livin' room to talk it over, after Jeanne has went to the movies with the dame from next door to see Charley Pickford or the like in "What's Marriage Compared to Divorce?" or somethin' like that. Well, Joe, Ike tries out a cigar for a coupla minutes and then he looks around the room and let forth a sigh which like to upset the sofa and says he would give his right lung if he had a home like this

and was happily and securely wed and etc. Well, I says why don't he get married and be done with it whilst he can, because the prohibitionists ain't got around to that yet and he says he's willin', but the girl he wants to try it with ain't.

"That's nothin'," I says. "Grab off another one. They's a coupla hundred thousand dames in this state alone, not countin' the suffragettes. If one of 'em won't fall, try some more."

"By me it's different," he says, with another one of them sighs. "They could be one hundred thousand girls, *oder* one hundred million, I wouldn't want so many anyhow. Up in, now, Buffaloes, I got it a goil—Oy, such a peaches! Sadie Edelstein is the name and it could be Lillian Russell as far as the looks go. Her father is wholesale clothing and speaking from that I could get you a suit there for twenty dollars which if you can duplicate it on, now Broadway, for forty I'll pay the bill myself—well, *half* of it, anyhow! Sadie is crazy from the movies and always she asks me why ain't *I* a hero like Douglas Chaplin or Mary Kimball Bara and like that. Well, I says to her anybody could take it a jump from a bridge *oder* a train and she laughs at me and I says I'll prove it. Well, all right. She's walking past the hotel where I'm living in Buffaloes and I jump from the second story window on top from a wagon and

I get arrested and a lowlife judge charges me ten dollars and claims I'm crazy!"

Well, Joe, I like to choke to death tryin' to keep from laughin' in his face so I changed the subject and about eleven o'clock he went home after thankin' me a coupla hundred times for the dinner.

Joe, this bird struck me as bein' nothin' more than a big lonesome kid and I got to kinda like him at that, so I thought I'd try and find out just why the gang was all off him. I begin by askin' Watson and that's as far as I got.

"Why don't I like him?" he sneers. "Why, the big fathead—he thinks more of a nickel than you do of your liver! He's tighter than a drum and he wouldn't give a cigar coupon to see Niagara Falls run the other way. He's workin' here for next to nothin' and gyppin' me outa my job. I borreyed twenty bucks from him a week ago and give him my watch for security and dy'e think he'll give it up? Not a chance!"

"Have you gave him back the twenty?" I says.

"No!" says Watson. "Not yet—I'm a little shy. I'm willin' to give him five now and the rest next week if he'll gimme the clock and they ain't a thing doin'. Them Jews wouldn't do a favor for their brother. I can't understand how *you* come to fall for the big stiff, unless he's got somethin' on you!"

"Look here, Stupid," I says. "Lay off that stuff about the Jews. That's all outa date since the war and it was bum stuff even before that, get me? I went over the top with them Jews, as you call 'em, in France and if they ever get roused up over here to scrap like they did there—well, a lotta you guys which gets a laugh outa a long nose is gonna be terrible sorry! It don't make no difference no more whether a guy is a Jew or anything else—if he's a American, we don't wanna bother where he goes to church. Why should this guy give up your watch when you won't pay off? I wouldn't give it up either. You like money the same as any Jew does and you know it—so does everybody else! The reason you guys thinks of a Jew and money in the same breath is because a Jew has got brains enough to hold on to his and you guys ain't! How many Jews goes to the poor house, hey?"

"I never knowed you was so crazy about them kykes," sneers Watson.

"They's a lotta things you don't know," I says, "because you're thicker than Flanders mud. We had a priest in our outfit named Father McCarty which was one of them roming catholics and him and our top sergeant which was a Jew named Markowitz was like brothers through a year of a hell worse than any both of us will ever see! What d'ye think of that, hey?"

"I don't believe it!" says Watson. "I'll get that Ike guy to-day and grab my watch off of him or he won't play no baseball for a week, one or the other!"

Well, Joe, at that point who walks into the club house but no less than Ike and Watson gets up and stands in front of him.

"Hey!" he says. "Have you still got my watch?"

"Why not?" grins Ike. "Don't worry, I'll take care of it like it was a baby and so soon you give me them twenty dollars, it's yours."

"Lemme see it," says Watson, winkin' at the bunch, "I wanna be sure you ain't hocked it yet."

Joe, Ike falls. He reaches in his pocket and takes out the watch and Watson makes a sudden grab at it. It drops on the floor and Watson was there first. He straightens up, shakes it to see it's all right and shoves it in his pocket.

"Well, Shylock" sneers Watson, stickin' his chin in Ike's surprised face, "I guess I kinda stuck it over on you, hey?"

"Gimme it the watch, *oder* the twenty dollars!" gasps Ike, pale as cream.

"Try and get it, you big yellah stiff!" hisses Watson. "I won't give you nothin'. You'd take a guy's arm as security for a nickel, like that Shylock guy this feller Shakespeare wrote about

which wanted a pound of flesh. You Jews is all alike—I know you. I'll pay you when I'm darn good and ready. What are you gonna do about it?"

Well, Joe, Ike gets a coupla shades paler, but he don't say a word or do a thing and the gang all lets forth sighs of disappointment because they was both big guys and who don't relish a scrap? Ike had his hand on a brass towel rail and he was grippin' it hard and when he suddenly turned away and walked outa the club house that rail was bent through in the middle like it had been hit by a sledge.

Joe, I must say I certainly got a terrible shock when Ike didn't bounce that big tramp Watson for bawlin' him before all the gang. I lost no time askin' Ike about it and first he didn't say nothin' and then he calls me aside and says he has sworn a oath that he will never get in another scrap because he hit a guy seven years ago in Troy, N. Y., and it was a coupla months before they knowed whether that bird was gonna live or not. Since then, he says, he's ducked any and all kinds of brawls. Well, Joe, I looked Ike over and let it go at that.

Of course, Joe, you prob'ly no doubt read about the fire which we had in the hotel where the club was stoppin' and how poor Watson which had been

dabblin' with the brew got caught in bed and was terrible burned. The gang all felt bad about it and when the doctor come down in the lobby and says his chances is practically none, it didn't make us feel no better. Joe, Ike seemed more interested than anybody else.

"*Gevhalt!*" he says. "Ain't they nothin' you could do for that poor feller, doctor?"

"Well," says the medico, scratchin' his chin, "that's what I came down to see you fellows about. We're going to try grafting—if we can get any one who is willing to—well, give up some skin!"

With that he looks us all over, Joe, and we look at the ceilin' and the floor and each other and some more points of interest and nobody says nothin' for quite a spell. Fin'ly Ike steps forward.

"Say!" he says to the doc. "Don't look no further. I'm big and fat and skin's like nothing to me. If you think it'll save that poor feller's life, doctor, take as much as you want. I could stand it." He turns around and grins at the rest of us which is dumb with surprise, "I ain't no, now, Shylock," he says. "Shylock wanted he should have a pound from flesh, hey? Well—I'll give one away!"

Well, Joe, when Ike heard he would have to take a shot of ether before the doc could plane off some

of his hide he turned pale and it looked for a while like he was gonna call the thing off. He claims he don't mind losin' the skin, but Oy how that ether stuff smells and if he's got to be made unconscious for all he knows they're libel to remove him from a arm or the like whilst they are at it. Fin'ly he gives in after gettin' me to write a letter to his girl in Buffalo askin' her to come down and look him over in the hospital and don't worry it ain't nothin' serious—maybe!

Joe, the doctors says Watson owes his life to Ike which is now out of the hospital and walkin' around O. K. although he won't play no baseball 'til around August anyways. He ain't losin' no sleep over that though, Joe, because his pay is still goin' on and he got himself a wife in return for the skin he give up for Watson. Me and Jeanne was in the cast at the weddin' and we had the time of our lives. Joe, I am strong for them Jewish weddin's—they blow money like water and I never had such a feed in my life, on the level.

Joe, as usual, I had a hand in Ike grabbin' off his bride. They is few things happens of any account that I ain't mixed up in, outside of the peace conference and as far as that goes if they kept Ireland out, where did mere I get off to be called in, hey? When Ike's girl come down from Buffalo I took her up to my flat and told her just what Ike

had done for a friend, layin' it on good and thick, and I says if she is in the market for heroes, Ike was somethin' extry special, and what movie star had ever done anything like givin' up his good skin and etc. I also says that she had better grab him quick because I had seen half a dozen dames from the Follies hangin' around the hospital since that story got in the papers, and he's got a nurse which would make Venus quit. Joe, she eat it all up and Ike had a ring on her finger three days later.

Joe, the first day Ike was able to leave the hospital he went in the next room and seen Watson. What come off between them I don't know, because I went outside whilst Watson was doin' everything but kissin' Ike and tellin' him he'd never forget what he done for him and etc. and etc. I met Ike a few minutes later in the office downstairs.

"Well," he says with his famous grin, "I'm glad that poor feller is gonna live. I got it fixed he should have it his own nurse and like that and he could pay me when he gets out. It's terrible 'to lay in the hospital day in and day out so I fixed it he should have it as nice as possible." With that, Joe, he give a sigh. "*Na!*" he says. "That's all over with. I got ten minutes to meet my Sadelah and——"

Joe, he pulls out a watch and looks at it and I like to fell in a nearby convenient garbage can.

It was Watson's watch!

"Hey?" I hollers. "Where did you get that?"

"It belongs by Watson," he says. "He owes me twenty dollars and I'm holding this for a security. Remember he took it away from me? Well, I seen it laying on the table from his bed and I says well so long as you ain't going nowheres the time makes no difference by you and I might as well keep this 'til you pay me them twenty dollars and——"

"D'ye mean to tell me," I says, "that you was willin' to give up your own flesh for that guy for nothin' and yet you grab his watch as security for twenty bucks?"

"Why not?" he says. "It ain't the money—by me it's business! You could believe it, it'll cost me more as twenty dollars for them things I ordered for Watson he should be comfortable. That's like nothing. If I could help it somebody else to-morrow like I helped Watson I'd do it in a minute. I know what you think—that everything by us is *gelt*. Well, it ain't. I give the, now, Red Cross, I give the Salvation's army, I give the Y. M. C. A., I give this and I give that—you could believe it, for a long time I got the idea they was charging the whole war up to me. But why

should Watson not pay me them twenty dollars? Say listen—to help anybody I'll do it anything, but business, that's a horse from another color!"

Joe I think that baby was right at that, hey?

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (The undisputed
monarch of the diamond).

CHAPTER II

SHE SUPES TO CONQUER

SECOND INNING

Riverside's Drive, N. Y.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, I have just come out of the most terrible experience a man can have outside of bein' electrocuted or the like. We have gone to work and moved from where we was livin' in peace and quiet to a place on Riverside's Drive where Grant's Tomb and all the rich guys lives and the dugout we are in now would make the Waldorf look like a stable, not that our ex-home wasn't class. Joe, I was perfectly satisfactory to live where we was and they had been no complaints about us from the neighbors or like that, but Jeanne has fell in with a bunch of friends now which is leadin' her this way and that like she was a young infant baby and had no mind of her own. Our new home is called the Royal Majestic Superb and they is two tar babies as big as the Singer Buildin' full of brass buttons and the like which does nothin' but stand outside all day long

guardin' the entrance so's no mud won't splash on it and etc.

Joe, I thought the rent was brutal in my ex-flat, but alongside of what I have got to try and raise every month for the new one, the last one was free and they throwed in breakfast. On top of that, Jeanne goes to work and hires a extry maid to do nothin' but look after my baby and I got a payroll now like the Bethlehem Steel Works. Where I am gonna grab off this dough is past me and the first time you read that they was some bank robbed of a lotta jack you can say, "Well, poor Ed—he was drove to it and I trust he don't get over forty years!"

Joe, baseball with me will soon be nothin' more than a side line, because I have grabbed off a couple more jobs for myself so's I can keep from joinin' the boys in the almshouse. The war's corespondent which I flitted about France with has came back and what does he do but get me on the payroll of a newspaper here. All I gotta do is write a lotta stuff every day about the baseballs situation and the like, with a coupla funny cracks here and there if possible and they will let me sign my name to it, provided I got the nerve. Well, Joe, then they was a sporting's goods house which made me a preposition to try and sell their wares, usin' my famous name as a decoy, and I will

get a commission payin' more than the one I had in the army did, outa that. Joe, I am busier than a guy with the ice water concession in Hades, I'll tell the world! In the mornin' I am sellin' sportin' goods, in the afternoon I am playin' baseballs and at night I am a full fledge arthur writin' articles for the newspaper. I am tryin' now to get somethin' to do between twelve p. m. and day-break so's I won't look like no loafer and only today I answered a ad for a night watchman.

So far, Joe, I have failed to set the lake on fire at either of my new jobs. I managed to sell Shorty Smith a catcher's glove and the little fat-head didn't pay me for it and the next day he gets traded to the Cubs and took the mitt with him. That ain't bad enough, but, Joe, I put in five hours at this trick newspaper writin' thing, gettin' together real dope from the inside. It was good stuff if I do say it myself, Joe, and 1,000 times better than the hop them reporters writes, which what do *they* know about baseballs? It was all about how I felt certain that the game of baseballs was sure to catch on with the American public and be a success if give time and Mac was makin' a big mistake by not doublin' my salary before I was grabbed by some more sensible club and I could pitch rings around Ernie Shore any day of the week, not countin' Sundays and I expect to have

one of my biggest years and where does them landlord gyps get off to raise the poor man's rent and etc. and etc. Altogether they was two pages of it, Joe, all hot stuff. Well, they throwed away three quarters of it and says it was pretty punk but they would try and fix it up and get a reporter to write it hereafter and all I would have to do is sign it. I guess I ain't cut out to be no arthur, hey, Joe? A guy has gotta be born that way and get it the same way he gets his ears, yeh?

Well, Joe, I guess you have seen where the Pittsburg Pirates become ravin' maniacs yesterday and grab off a game from me, 6 to 5. Joe, they win it in the ninth frame when they are two runs behind and I have pitched sterlin' silver ball up to then. I never got such a tough break in all my life, except when I was captured a prisoner by the squareheads, and them Pittsburg guys had to pull trickery and foul's play on me to beat me. I will show you the lengths them birds went to in puttin' it over me and how desperate is the modern day club when they have to go up against me. Joe, the ninth innin' comes along and the score is 5 to 2 favor me, or us, I guess I oughta say—though at times it must look to the public as if I was really the whole team from the way them guys work in back of me. Well, anyways, I walk the first man up just so's he could see what a base looked like for

the first time that day and what does he do but steal second on me. That's gratitude, hey? This here got me so infuriatin' that I made the next guy pop out and four pitched balls sent the third baby to the dugout. The next bird guessed one right and singled, sendin' this here ingrate which I had walked, to third. Well, here I am with two on and two out and the game sewed up in my shirt pocket.

Joe, even if you was a palm's reader you will never guess what happened then or what them guys pulled on me. I got two strikes on the last man up and it's all over but the showers, when just as I was shootin' over the third strike I hear a noise which I have often heard in France, right over my head. It is no less than a areyoplane, Joe, and just as it sails over the park this batter slams the pill on a line to centre and them big stiff's out there is all lookin' up in the air at this here areyoplane and it went for a home run!

Joe, one of the reporters told me afterward in the clubhouse that he had seen the manager of the Pirates rush madly from the park when that last guy come to bat and he was mutterin' "Somethin' must be done!" The reporter says he will bet a million dollars to a handful of crullers that the Pirates' manager went out and hired that guy to fly over the park at the critical minute, takin' a

last desperate chance that our outfielders would look up at it long enough for the ball to go through 'em. Well, Joe, I wouldn't go so far as to come right out and charge a big league manager with no crime like that, because he would have had to have worked fast to of hired that aviator and they was no areyoplanes parked outside the grounds when I come in. However—you can draw your own conclusions, Joe. Anyways, I have not five minutes ago wrote a letter to the National Commission with all the facts and demandin' that no areyoplanes is allowed to fly over any ball park whilst I am pitchin'. I got enough to contend with as it is, hey, Joe?

Joe, Jeanne was out to the park and seen the game and when we come home I am naturally enough sore and growlin' like a ill bear. I says I would of win that game on the bit if I hadn't of been so upset over this here movin' and the high rent and the like and half of it was her fault for not bein' satisfied to live where we was. Joe, she stamps her foot at me.

“*Non, non, non!*” she says. “Tell me nothing of that baseball. Did not Jeanne see with her own eye everything?”

“What's that gotta do with it?” I says. “You don't know nothin' about the game anyways and——”

“*Tiens !*” she butts in, with a fresh stamp of the foot. “But you are of the exceeding wrong! There is few I do not know of the baseballs. Here—take then this example; if in that *neuvième* inn-ing you do not allow those first adversary from Peetsburg to achieve that *premier* base by the free presentation of the walk, nevaire would you have lose the battle! *N’est ce pas?*”

Well, Joe, you could of knocked me cold with a bat! Here is Jeanne, which is supposed to know the same about baseball as I know about the League of Nations, tellin’ me that if I hadn’t of passed the first guy up in the ninth I would of win it!

“Where did *you* ever——” I begins, when she cuts me off.

“Also,” she says, “let us take of those *deuxième* inn-ing. There throw you that ball *trois metres* ovaire the head of these catcher. She could not stop it, *non*, not at all! What then does it happen? *Viola!* That is what we of the baseballs scholars know as a wild beast pitch. *Quel dommage!* Around and around runs that little *petit homme* from Peetsburg and poof!—but he is back from his original destination and the officer holler ‘Secure!’ ”

Joe, I did let in a run on a wild pitch at that!

“What’s the idea of *you* gettin’ wised up on

baseball, hey?" I says when I could get my breath. "And who handed you all this stuff?"

Joe, she gimme a chastely salute on the forehead and also that million dollar smile of hers which makes her immediately look like a chorus girl would like to.

"Ah!" she says. "Since then the baseballs is my husbands—what you say, business—why should not Jeanne become herself able to talk with him of that? Those *charmants* newsmen of those press box tell me everything. See—again in that *septième* inn-ing. What did you then? Ha! Again you have the *faux pas*. You——"

"Never mind what I did!" I hollers. "Who pitched that game—me or you? Lay off them reporters and let's have the eats. I'll do all the ball playin' in this family!"

"Why then do you not make the start?" she says, with a grin.

Beat that one, Joe!

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (The *beaucoup*
pitcher of those baseball.)

On the Ways Out West.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, here I am travellin' alone again with no company but the rest of the club on account of

Jeanne and my baby bein' home in my magnificent apartment at the Royal Majestic Superb. I know full well it will be a terrible surprise to you to hear that Jeanne is not with me, but think what a blow it was to me. Them swell friends Jeanne has fell in with of late is to blame for the whole thing, and, Joe, the situation is gettin' seriouser every day. They ain't no question but we are commencin' to driftin' apart and what the finish will be is a subject that would baffle all Europe. Joe, Jeanne is already goin' to Columbia's University to learn English and payin' them birds a high price and only yesterday she went to do some bridge whistin' at the Waldorf with the Higher Thought Cult, whatever that is. As far as that goes, Joe, I am not exactly ig'rant, but I don't even know what bridge whistin' is—it sounds phoney to me. I have showed Jeanne every bridge in New York and if they got one at the Waldorf, they must of put it up whilst I was away.

Joe, the other day I was all set to take her and my baby to the circus on account of the rain preventin' me from workin', when what does Jeanne do but blow into the room all dressed up and ready to set sail for somewheres.

"Just a minute!" I says. "Get my baby ready for the street, I am gonna treat the both of you to the circus."

Joe, she give a little giggle—as much as to say “Where d’ye get that stuff?”

“But no, Edouard!” she says. “Jeanne must then go to the *école* for her *Anglais* lesson. That *cirque* he can wait, *n’est ce pas?*”

“Forget about that goin’ to college to learn English,” I says. “We’re blowin’ dough as it is like the Rockefeller foundation was keepin’ us. Why can’t *I* learn you the English language as well as them college guys, hey?”

“Ah!” she smiles at me. “But then you do not *yourself* speak him that *Anglais, ma chéri*. Maybe soon sometime Jeanne and Edouard will learn him together, *oui?*”

And with that she’s gone!

Oh, boy!!!!

Joe, try and tie that one, hey? Can you imagine a crack like that? I can’t speak the English—and I was born on Second Avenue!

Well, Joe, that ain’t the worst of it. I let her get away with that and she’s goin’ to Columbia’s University three times a week takin’ English and what does she do the other day but gimme a call for sayin’ “Aint.” She claims that’s all wrong and I oughta say “Isn’t” and we had quite a jam over the thing and I don’t know *yet* who win the argyment.

Joe, when I got ready to pack up and start on our first trip west openin’ in Philly, Jeanne says

she has changed her mind and can't go with me. Before I can recover from that stunnin' blow she says she has thought it over and she would be nutty to chase all over the country with me, ridin' in trains and the like and besides she's givin' a "dinner dance" the same week I'm leavin'. Joe, I begin to gasp for air like a fresh caught flounder and I'm afraid to cut loose for fear I'll say too much. So I simply remarks in a deadly and coldly voice that I'm goin' down to the corner and play a little pinochle with Phil Bloom and etc. I ain't no more reached for my hat, when Jeanne steps in front of me and says I ain't goin' nowheres, but I am gonna get inside of a evenin' clothes and outside of a shave and hair-cut because she has got a lot of her swell friends comin' up for dinner and the best thing I can do is not to talk at all when they come.

Well, Joe, I dashed out of the house in a terrible rage and I must of walked around the block 254 times before I cooled off at all. I got a shave and a haircut and a massage and a shampoo with manicure and etc., Joe, and when I come out I felt a little better. I called up Jeanne and says as long as she is givin' this here banquet I will bring up Phil Bloom and Eddie Stevens and the gang and we will have a real party and what does she need from the delicatessen. Joe, first I am treated to a whole lot of French and then she says I will not

do nothin' of the sort like bringin' up the gang from the corner, because every one of them is nothin' but a *bourgeois* which is French for roughneck, and the sooner I get away from them the better and she has ordered the dinner from a cater.

Joe, she hung up on me before I can think of a comeback and though I was ready to bust from simple rage, I went right up to the house like she ordered. No matter what Jeanne does I will have to stand for it, Joe, because I am as crazy over her now as I was when I first flashed her in that France place and if you ever seen her you would also see what a boob I would be to let her get away from me.

Joe, wouldn't it be a terrible thing if after all I have went through I would wind up by losin' my wife? Even the money I would no doubt save would fail to make it up, Joe, and anyways I'd only prob'ly spend it on somethin' else, hey?

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (A broken hearted husband,
which has got to pitch just the same.)

Speedin' Over the Rails.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, it is so long since I have wrote you I guess you have got the idea I have went to work and committ suicide, and it would be no wonder if

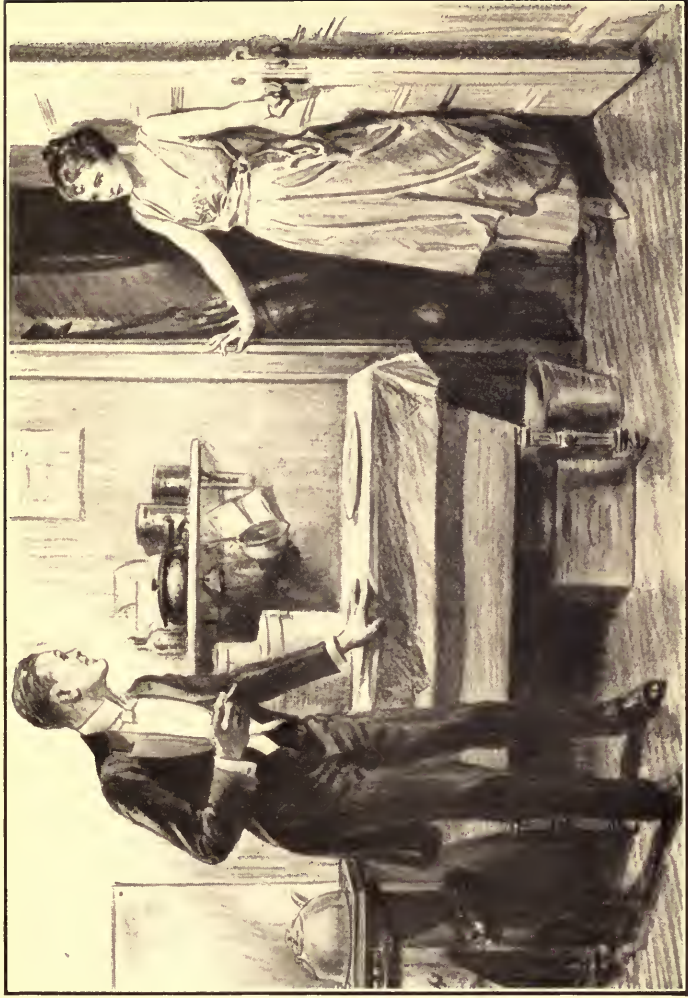
I did the way things has been breakin' for me of late. I hurled seven games on this first trip west and hurled three of them away, but we did ourselves a lotta good altogether and if you ain't too tight to buy a newspaper you can see we are still leadin' the league. In spite of the fact that I feel I am gettin' to be a old man on account of family troubles and the like, I win a game yesterday just before we started for home, shuttin' out the Cubs 6 to 0. I only allowed five hits, though the papers says seven, but what does them guys know? After the sixth innin', first base could of been in Russia as far as the Cubs was concerned and I rapped out a triple myself in the eighth with two runners on the bags, turnin' them immediately into two runs. Everywheres I go I am give quite a reception, and why not, but that don't lift the terribly strain I am under on account of suddenly becomin' unhappily married out of the clear sky.

I have only had two letters from Jeanne since I left, Joe, and neither of them would cause no jury to bend forward to listen. I don't know how she'll be when I get back or even if she'll be there at all, and where's my baby and etc. I tell you, Joe, I am near the brink of a ravin' maniac! I would like to get all them friends of Jeanne's which dragged us apart into one big room and murder 'em all and be done with it!

I will tell you about that there banquet which Jeanne give before I left and which wound up in us havin' prob'ly the first real scrap since we been wed. It was a peach whilst it lasted, Joe, and I'll tell the world both of us covered the situation pretty thoroughly whilst we was at it.

Well, I get into this here evenin's dress and etc. and if I do say it myself, Joe, I am a knockout in one of them headwaiter's uneyforms, bein' built like a model for them collar ads in the subway and checkin' up 6 ft. 2 in. not countin' my hat and tipplin' the scales at 224, all bone and muscle with little if any fat.

Joe, I come outa my room and Jeanne is nowheres to be seen and I'm so hungry I could of eat pig iron saute so what do I do but go into the kitchen and crack open the ice box. In a coupla minutes more I am filin' away large quantities of cold ham and the like into my stomach and havin' a delightfully time. All of a sudden, Joe, they is a interruption. Some one is standin' in the doorway gazin' at me. I look around and—Oh, boy!!!! Joe, I have seen some swell lookin' and etc. dames in my time, but you, me, Adam, or nobody else ever seen no dame which looked like this one! Joe, that goes for Mark's & Anthony, Nero, Romeo, Three Weeks, Flo Ziegfeld and etc. If they is such a thing as angels, they look like this



“Some one is standin’ in the doorway gazin’ at me. I look around and—Oh, boy!!!”

one. Her hair is all piled up on top of her head and she could of win a beauty contest on *that* alone. She's got a complexion that would make a whole hot house full of roses look like a bed of cabbage and speakin' of *figures*, as people will, well, Joe—words fail me, as the deaf mute says. She's got on some wonderful dress which ain't doin' her various charms a bit of harm and standin' right there with her lips half parted—Oh, boy!!!!!! Joe, I threw away a ham sandwich I had just made, stood up and leaned back against the wash tubs, gaspin' for breath. My heart was slammin' against my ribs like it wanted to jump out and go away from there and I was tremblin' all over like a guy which is a nervously wreck. The only time I ever felt that way in my life before, Joe, was the first time I went over the top. We stand there for prob'ly three seconds without nobody sayin' a word. I can't—and she won't. Joe, I tried to say somethin' and my tongue lays down on me, but my feet don't! I am across that there kitchen in one jump and the next second I got my arms around this here opium fiend's dream and why shouldn't I be kissin' her, because Joe—it's *Jeanne!*

Well, it's a good five minutes anyways before she's bawlin' me out for mussin' her up and etc. and sayin' she expects them friends of hers any minute,

but, Joe, she's still got her arms around me and I was the first one to hear the telephone ring. We let it ring. For awhile we was Ed. Harmon and Jeanne and then, Joe, them birds commence to arrive and we turn immediately into Mr. and Mrs. E. Edison Harmon.

Joe, it was a tough night for me from then on. They was a lot of dames come in, many of which is boss good lookers and all of which was dressed to thrill, but the male delegation all looked to me like conscientious objectors and Class V in the draft. I get introduced all around to a lot of Brown-Smiths and J. Elderberry Winston-Succotash or words to that effect and whilst I hated the whole lot of 'em, they wasn't no question about 'em all bein' class. Joe, I loathe them birds, but you gotta give it to 'em! They got a certain somethin' about 'em which makes a guy like me feel like a waiter whether he wants to or not. The way them dames says they was charmed to meet me and the way them male bodyguards of theirs lit a cigarette, for the example, made me feel I was shy of somethin', though what it was I didn't know. All of which only infuriates me the more! They all claims they had heard all about me and what am I doin' now and the ladies call me "lieutenant" and the males begins "Old mannin" me to death. Joe, I am used to bein' made a fuss over and bein' a

human bein' I like it, but them birds all gimme the idea they was interested in me the same way they would be in some wildly animal at the zoo or the fat lady at the circus. I didn't feel right and when I says I am playin' baseball for a livin' and my naturally quick ear catches a coupla sniffs from some of them dames—well, Joe, it didn't make me feel no better.

Joe, the dinner passes off without no bloodshed though I managed to spill a oyster cocktail over a dame next to me but I couldn't help it on account of bein' both angry and nervous and if the guy which brung the dame in had opened his mouth, I was all set to let him have it on the chin. Then, Joe, the dancin' commences. Joe, I dance the same way a armless guy can play the fiddle, so I get sandwiched in on the sofa between a coupla dames which only wants to know did I find the war vicious or not and how many Germans did I kill the first day. In the meanwhile, they is one of them ladies' men dancin' around with Jeanne and Joe, this guy grabbed every dance and they was goin' so well that the rest of 'em stopped to watch it. When a fat dame next to me says, "You'd think they was made for each other!" speakin' of Jeanne and this simp, I had reached the last straws and I jumped up off the sofa and shut off the music. Joe, every eye in the place was on

me and it was about as embarrassin' as walkin' up Fifth Avenue in pyjamas, but I have been in tight holes before. In the midst of the deadly silence and a frown from Jeanne which would of killed a guy which hadn't been a clean liver, I says in a calmly voice.

"Let's all shoot craps!" at the same time producin' a pair of bones from my pocket.

Joe, for a minute they is not a word and then Jeanne laughs kinda nervous and skips over and turns on the music again and I catch a dame eyin' me through a pair of glasses with a cane on the end and I give the whole thing up and beat it to the corner, leavin' the party flat on its back!

Well, Joe, I gotta stand for a lotta kiddin' from the pinochle hounds on account of comin' in with this evenin's dress on, but when they seen how sore I was and heard me offer to knock any three of 'em cold if they didn't lay off of me, we had peace and quiet. I play auction 'til one o'clock, 'losin' eight berries on the night on account of biddin' wild through rage and then I go to what was once my happy and etc. home. I tried to sneak in, but Jeanne is waitin' for me and nails me.

Joe, if she looked good dressed for the party, she was a knockout now. I says "Halloo sweetheart," and she says "Sit down, Edouard!" in a coldly

Well, Joe, that was the first shot fired in the battle of the Royal Majestic Superb Apartments, \$150 the month.

She begin, Joe, by givin' me a terrible bawlin' out for leavin' her party and then she says I gotta either give up her or the gang on the corner. The next requirement of the armistice is that I gotta learn the English language and before I can recover from that, she trots out the heavy artillery—*I gotta give up baseball!*

Joe this here last thing was too much for me and I grabbed a chance when she stopped for breath and cut loose myself. I says I will not give up my old friends for nobody and baseball is my livin'—and hers too—and I would be a simp to give it up, and as long as I am payin' the expenses, she should worry what I do. Well, then Joe, she arises from up off the chair and plays her ace. She says one of the guys which was up at her party was a big movie director and he says she is a ideal type and won't she step down to his studio the first chance she gets. She says she's gonna go in the movies to help pay our expenses and maybe she can get me in too and I won't have to be no roughneck ball player.

Joe, I am on the verge of the D. T's by this time and I ask her don't she love me no more in a tremblin'ly voice and at that she forgets she

is sore and just simply sprang across the room to me and we were Ed. and Jeanne once again for a minute. After we have got it all settled whether she loves me or not, Joe, she says that all of this is bein' done for my own good and my baby's. She says she wants me to get outa baseball and get into somethin' big where I won't be all through whilst I am still a young man and also she wants me to meet nice people and speak the English language correct and etc. and she will stand by me and help me no matter what happens, because they will never be nobody like Ed. Harmon to her. Joe, then she says why don't I jump the team right then and there and stay with her instead of leavin' immediately on the train which will make her all alone.

"How are we gonna live?" I says "I gotta do somethin' and——"

"Ah, *oui!*" she butts in, kissin' me, "but Monsieur Frothingham has promise me that if you come down to-morrow to his office he will give you those portfolio as a salesman for the motor car and——"

"Who's this guy?" I says.

"Do you not then remember?" says Jeanne. "I dance with him to-night—Oh, very much. He——"

"That's enough!" I hollers, jumpin' up, Joe,

I am immediately the victim of the red eyed monster known as jealous. "This guy wants to gimme a job so's he can dance with you, hey?" I bellers. "Well, I'm through! You can do what you want. It's either me or your friends and I'll give you 'til I come back to think it over!"

Joe, with that I rushed in and kissed my baby and dashed from the house without another word. Jeanne called after me as I was slammin' the door, but I made out like I didn't hear her and half way down I was gonna come back, but I would of missed the train if I did. Anyways, I sent her two telegrams from the station apologizin', for everything. What it'll get me I don't know. We are due in New York at eleven to-night, Joe and for Heaven's sakes wish me luck, because if I ever lose Jeanne they will be another lunatic at the large.

Yours truly,

Ed. HARMON. (A innocent victim
of fate—but still *some* pitcher).

Riverside's Drive, N. Y.

DEAR JOE:

Joe, if they is a lotta ink spots and blots on this, don't blame me, because I can't help it. I have been through some terribly things since I last wrote you and it ain't over yet. I gotta start against

Brooklyn to-morrow and if they don't paste me all over the lot then they will never win another ball game, I'll tell the world! Alongside of me, Joe, a guy facin' the electrical chair, ain't got a thing on his mind and still and all I am a innocent victim which wouldn't harm a fly, unless maybe it lit on me somewheres.

Well, Joe, when we pull into New York I am all ready to dash for the telephone and let Jeanne know I am home when there she is right at the station and lookin' like Morgan's income tax looked to the revenue guys. Before I can say anything I am bein' smothered with kisses and asked never to go away again and people is turnin' to look at us and what do I care. We used up about a half hour sayin' hello and then get a taxi and go home and Jeanne says she's got a surprise for me, but I don't pay no attention to that because I am busy lookin' at her and thinkin' what a lucky guy I am and is they maybe somethin' else I can do besides play baseball. Well, of course, the first thing I wanna see is my baby and, Joe, he is fine and so is everything else and Jeanne goes outa her way to be nice and the like and it was just like it used to be before them swell friends of hers come across our path.

Well, Joe, the next day is when the terrible blow falls. I ain't got nothin' to do in the after-

noon and I ask Jeanne where she wants to go and she says let's go to the movies like we used to. Well, Joe, I am so happy by this time that the roof could of fell in and I wouldn't of minded, because I don't own it anyways and I figure that Jeanne must of canned her new found friends and decided to stick with little old Ed. for once and all. Joe, I says where would she like to go and she says they is a movie called " 'Twas Her Own Fault," which she understands is great, and let's go to that and I says all right, and we set sail. When we get to the theatre, Joe, Jeanne won't have it no other way but we got to get seats right on top of the screen and they cost fifty cents the each, but what's the difference as long as it's my own wife, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, what the picture was all about I fear I will never know. I left that there theatre three minutes after I come in, boilin' with rage and ready to bite nails in half, not that nobody asked me to. The very first scene was in a ball room and they is about fifty different people dancin' around and the like, but amongst them fifty is one person which caused me to let out a holler which was heard all over that theatre! Joe, I know you will seriously doubt this, but one of them dancers in that movie *was no less than Jeanne!*

My Gawd!—hey?

Joe, Jeanne grabs my arm and asks me not to

make no scene in the theatre and we get up and go out whilst everybody else forgets about the picture and watches us.

Well, I am so crazy mad, Joe, that I call a taxi and we go home in that for \$2.50 and they ain't a word said all the way up except Jeanne bitin' her nails and me starin' straightly and coldly dead ahead. Once in our flat I closed the door and in a voice which cut like a razor, I demand a explanation.

I got what I ordered, Joe!

First Jeanne tells me not to talk to her like she was a ball player and take off my hat and stand up 'til she sits down and when I have done all of that like I am in a trance, she tells me that the movie director she had at her "dinner party" had offered her a chance to supe in this picture for five berries a day and carfare. She says she thought it was only right that she oughta help pay the expenses of our home and she took the job and had saved all the money she got and didn't see a thing wrong with it. Everybody had been very nice and gentelmanly to her and I oughta be glad she was doin' her bit instead of bawlin' her out.

Well, Joe, I go temporarily nutty and who wouldn't—you never seen Jeanne—and I says I am perfectly capable of supportin' a wife and I can steal what I am short if necessary, but whilst

I am payin' the bills don't let her ever dare to do such a thing like that again. Well, Joe, it goes back and forth and back and forth and we ain't gettin' nowheres and fin'ly Jeanne busts out and says the movie guy has told her she has the makin's of a star and he will guarantee to put her over and her salary the first year will be ten thousand iron men and that's more that *I* get. Joe, I start to rave again and she cuts me off cold and sharp and claims that she only suped in this picture to make me see that she was able to earn her own livin' and she don't really like workin' in the movies, but she *does* like her independence and all the French is like that, and if you don't believe it, ask Germany. Joe, she winds up by sayin' that either I cast about for somethin' to make a livin' outside of baseball, cut the gang on the corner and learn to speak English correct, or she will go into the movies, and make my mind up quick. Joe, I says I will do what I darn please and grab my hat and beat it.

Joe, I got as far as the corner and I went into a drug store and called Jeanne up and the first thing she says is "Hello, sweetheart!" and that beat me and I says can I come up and she says she can hardly wait, but I must do as she says for her sake, my baby's and my own. She says its embar-rassin' to her when I says "guy" and the like in

front of her swell friends and can't I just study English for Jeanne which loves me better than anything else on earth or points west.

Well, Joe, after that they is not much choice left to me, hey? I get a stationery store which is just closin' and stake myself to a book called "Greenleaf's Third Reader" for a buck and I come up with it and when Jeanne sees what I have did I come near dyin' from bein' kissed to death. She says she will never forget it and we start the first lesson together. Joe, can you imagine me sittin' up at 1 A. M. sayin',

"See the cow. Will the cow hurt the boy? No! The cow is a harmless yet useful animal which gives milk and butter and meat. The hide is also used in the manufacture of many necessities such as shoes and——"

Joe, that's enough, hey? A coupla weeks of this stuff and I'll be all primed for the old straight-jacket, I'll tell the world!

Yours truly,

Ed. HARMON. (Which will go the
limit for love).

CHAPTER III
A FOOL THERE WASN'T

THIRD INNING

Riverside's Drive, N. Y.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, no doubt you have been doin' nothin' but wonderin' why you ain't heard from me in so long and am I dead or what the devils is the matter and etc. Joe, I am not exactly dead, but I have had a terrible time of lately and don't tell *me* the formerly kaiser is worried, because I got more on *my* mind that that big stiff ever had, no kiddin'! In the first place, it has been weeks since I win a game and all I been doin' is fattenin' the battin' averages of the other clubs and makin' tramps which usually is in the habit of hittin' less than their age look like second Ty Cobbs and new Babe Ruths. Even that there collection of semi-pros which plays under the alias of the Boston Braves tied into me the other day and Mac removed me by hand after six innin's when everybody but Stallin's himself had got a fistful of hits.

Well, Joe, after that game, which was prob'ly no

doubt the most unusual one the Braves has played this season on account of them winnin' it, Mac and me had a short heart to heart talk for two hours in the club house. Joe, he got very unreasonably and claims I am layin' down on him like a dog and not givin' the club the best I got and that too much public fame and etc. has went to my head and runed me for practical use. He says I will have to take a brace terrible swift and show somethin' for the jack he's givin' me or else I will get a immediately chance to see how I like either Jersey City or Toronto, accordin' to which one will fall for me.

"Well," I says, when he had spoke his fill, "I can't help it! They's no use bawlin' me out, because that will get us nowheres. If bawlin' a guy out would make him good a umpire would become the greatest guy in the world over night! You can't get *me* sore, not even if you give me the raspberry off of the team. My wife don't want me to be no ball player anyways!"

"Tell your wife not to worry," snarls this sarcastical stiff, "I'll tell the world you *ain't*!"

Well, Joe, one word led to the other and fin'ly I asked for a week off to rest up and pull myself together and Mac says there is no need for me to tear back madly on *his* account and I can take all the rest of the weeks which is left if I wanna

and maybe me bein' away will no doubt cinch the pennant for the club.

Joe, I left him in a wildly rage, because if I had stayed there another minute I would of most doubtless give him a clout in the nose or the like and prob'ly got knocked kickin' in return.

Well, I suppose you are searchin' your brain wonderin' what has happened to me and my world's famous invincible pitchin' arm, hey? Joe, it's a tough life and a guy ain't sure from one day to another which way things is gonna break, if at all, and what has befell unto me was like a rollin' stone from a clear sky. Mac give out to the papers that I was laid up on account of a small bone snappin' off in my arm or my head or somethin', but that's the bunk. Joe, what I am actually laid up with is a broken heart.

Jeanne has went bodily into the movies!

Joe, that there thing alone would be more than enough to make the average guy quaff off a flagon of carbolic, but it ain't $\frac{1}{3}$ of what has come to pass in my formerly happy and delightfull home. I am forced to sit up 'til from 2 to 3 every A. M. and do nothin' less than study the English language which Jeanne claims I speak now like I had picked it up in or about Afghanistan. In the day's time, when I ain't playin' ball or bein' a arthur for the newspapers and etc., I got to

go to school to a little old guy which was once a professor from one of them big football colleges and is now tryin' to make a honest livin'. For three dollars the hour and not a nickel off for cash, this guy beats into my head the sensational fact that it's all wrong to say, "I ain't got nothin'," and the like. He also tells me a lotta hop about singles and plurals and where does this bird get off to teach me anything about singles when I led the National League in hittin' for two successively days at the beginnin' of the season? When he shows mercy and lets me go every day, Joe, I am gave a paper with a lotta maniacal stuff on it like, "To be or not to be, aha, there's a question for you!" which same was wrote by a fathead named Hamlet, which accordin' to the rest of the novel killed his mother's uncle, but was released on a technicality.

Joe, I copied this stuff down for three days like teacher told me and got manys the laugh outa it and then I thought I would knock the newspapers I am a arthur for silly by showin' 'em English and me was far from strangers. So what do I do, Joe, but write my stuff in the most exquisitely English one day and the sporting's editor throws it into the waste basket and says write it over in my own way, because they have hired me to write slang and not English and if they want the latterly they can get it for \$18 the week.

Well, that kinda puts me up against it, because if I get into the habit of speakin' nothin' but the purely English I will lose my job and if I don't I will lose my wife, but bein' a guy which is as full of ideas as Georgia is full of Southerners, I immediately and at once doped out a scheme to gimme a out from this jam, or critically situation as the highbrows wouldst call it. I went to work and hired a kid which lives in the next flat and is a high school inmate to copy off this stuff for me and when I hand it in every day the old guy which is slippin' this education de luxe grins like a wolf and claims I'm marvelous and I admit it.

Joe, most doubtless you will wanna know how come Jeanne to get into the movies when with this and with that I am draggin' down enough jack each week to support starvin' Armenia if it needst be, not that they ever asked me. Also why should she give a shark's leg whether or not they is somethin' seriously wrong with my grammar when the English she uses herself is liberally mixed with French and $\frac{1}{2}$ the time I gotta guess what she's sayin'. The answer to this is Joe, that Jeanne as you might have suspected is a member of the female's sex and there's that!

Well, the movie thing started when Jeanne got that job as a extry lady in one of them too many

reel thrillers called, "'Twas Her Own Fault!" Just what a extry lady is I can't say at this date, Joe, but that fits Jeanne all right which is not only somethin' extry but five-star special, besides.

After we have chastised the neighbors by discussin' the thing 'til half the tenants in the house sets out in the dead of night to look for other apartments, Jeanne give in and says she will quit the movies if I will drop baseball for life and have my supply of English completely overhauled. Bein' a glutton for punishment, Joe, I went out and filed my application with the nearest kindergarten and says I will vanish from baseball as soon as I can get another job.

This here caused some of the hostilities to let up for awhile, Joe, and the nearest thing to actual peace a guy which is happily married can get, was had.

Well, I went out on the road with the club and started off like a burnin' oil well, Joe, as far as pitchin' is concerned. The Pittsburg Pirates could do nothin' with me at all and outa two games I hurled against them babies I win a even one. Is they anything wrong with that? In Chicago I was poison's ivy to the Cubs. I went in against them guys three times and the best they could do was to cop the first two by the narrow margins of three runs each and although they put in pinch hitters and shifted their battin' order this way

and that they could only take the third game 5 to 2. Mac pitched me exactly but once against the Cincinnati Reds and you know how them guys was travellin' in July, hey? Well, it was all different when they went up against me! Joe, although them birds went crazy and tried their best to take the heart outa me with hits, I lasted a full five innin's before at a wink from Mac I went to the showers and let a new kid we got from Mobile go in and win the thing 8 to 7, to put a little confidence in the boy, this bein' his first start.

Of course, Joe, I realize fully well that it would of looked just as good in the box scores if I would of *win* some of them games instead of simply cuttin' the finishes fine, but you or nobody else ain't got no idea of the terribly mental strains I was underneath all the time whilst we was on the road. Here I am away from home almost three weeks and in all that time the only word I get from Jeanne is eleven letters, seven telegrams and a bare dozen souvenir post cards. How do I know what she is doin' from that? How do I know what has become of my baby, if anything? I'm thinkin' night and day that she must be terrible busy if she ain't got time to keep up a regular correspondence with me and if she's busy, why, what is she busy at, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, that was when I asked Mac for the

vacation, havin' stood about all the worry and etc. a human's bein' could without turnin' into a ravin's maniac. Joe, I am in no less than Boston at the time and after I have peaceified Mac, I grab hold of the first train for New York and in the hurry and excitement what do I do but forget to rent a hammock in the sleepin's car, with the sensational result that I gotta sit up all night in the club's car with the black as the shades of night porters. Well, along around 3 in the A. M. one of them etheyopiums shows some indications of brains and says let's shoot a trifle craps and I could scarcely keep from gettin' the hystericals outa pure joy, because I don't have to tell you, Joe, what a wolf I am with the bones, hey?

A porter which is as big as Pike's Peak and as black as \$48 worth the coal, sheds a set of dice from somewheres and the entertainment begins. Joe, I made about as many passes in the first hour as this here fast and deluxe express train was makin' miles! All you could see of them porters was the whites of their eyes. I took 'em down the line toot sweet one after the other and Sweet Cookie—how them babies did squeal! By the time we was roarin' through Mt. Vernon I was over a hundred fish to the good and then I lose the bones to this big human ink ad, which was pop-eyed and breathin' hard.

"C'mon yere to papa!" he yells to them bones and, Joe, I'll say they did!

That bird simply sevened and elevened like that's all the numbers they was on the dice and at Grand Central he had took me for everything but my watch, as I quit cold when I lose the chain. This baby could do more with two dice than Russell Sage ever done with two dollars and when I bellered that they must be crooked he tucks my jack in his pocket and lets forth a grin.

"Mos' doubtless, boss!" he says. "Mos' doubtless they is. But then again, them's the same evidential bones which *you* run *us* ragged with, so it's even Stephen!"

I hadda borreh a nickel from the Pullman's conductor to go up home in the subway, which was tough, Joe, because you know what a hound I am for taxis.

Well, Joe, naturally enough I was in a terrible humor when I got up to my flat after all these here things havin' befell unto me, but I thought that the minute I seen Jeanne and my baby and had a hearts to hearts talk with 'em about this and that, everything wouldst be peaches again. Goin' up in the elevator, I realized how lonesome it must be for my little wife with me away half the time and etc. and that maybe it wouldst be a good thing after all if I would quit baseball and grab off a job

where I could stay in one place all the time, like traffic cop or somethin'.

Joe, when I get outside the door of my flat my ears is astonished with the sounds of musically instruments at play. They is a piano and a coupla fiddles goin' at the very least and other noises comin' forth which a guy don't have to be a palm's reader to figure that dancin' and etc. is bein' had. Well, I think maybe Jeanne has asked the dame from next door to come in and keep her company for one night so's she won't perish from bein' alone and she will no doubt leave the minute she sees me come in so's I can have a private talk with my wife and also somethin' to eat and like that. With that I ring the bell. Joe, little did I know what I was gonna go through in the next few hours, or I would never of pushed that little white button!

In a minute the door opens and a swell lookin' dame with a short white lace apron on and some more lace on top of her head, stands before me and looks me up and down as cold as the middle of Alaska. With the openin' of the door the music and chatter gets much louder and takin' a slant over this dame's shoulder I see a lotta people in evenin's clothes strollin' back and forth or dancin'. I picked up my suit case and took off my hat.

"Excuse me!" I says, feelin' like a boob, "I

have gone to work and rang the wrong bell. I was lookin' for Harmon's flat."

This dame immediately gets 38 degrees cooler.

"*This* is Mrs. Harmon's apartment," she says, (like she was sayin', "Take the groceries around to the back!")

Joe, d'ye get that? *Mrs.* Harmon's apartment!

"Mrs. Ed. Harmon?" I says.

"Mrs. E. Edison Harmon," she tells me, movin' to close the door.

"Wait a minute!" I says. "Tell her I wanna see her right away, will you?"

Up goes this dame's eyebrows.

"*Who* wants to see her?" she says.

Joe, this here was gettin' my goat.

"E. Edison Harmon!" I hollers. "C'mon now, make it snappy. I——"

"Have you a card?" butts in the human iceberg.

I was just gonna push by her into the flat, when a familiarly voice comes from the inside:

"Marie, why do you wait? Close then the door—I will see no one!"

"Jeanne!" I yells, droppin' the suit case on friend Marie's foot.

Joe, out into the hall stepped a girl. They ain't nothin' unusually in that, but Sweet Cookie—

you should of got a flash at *this* one! The only way you'll ever see another one anywheres near like her, Joe, is to eat \$50,000 worth the opium and then go to sleep! She would of been a knock-out leanin' over a washtub, but not even the combined imaginations of every guy which ever wrote a pome could give you even a faintly idea of how she looked in this evenin's gown she was featurin' now! I remember thinkin' of red roses, gleamin' white ivory, Georgia peaches with Grade A. cream, Annette Kellerman, Mary Pickford and the first time I seen the Grand Canyon. Joe, the blood begin to pump through my veins and I give a shiver like the first time we was in them dear old front line trenches with Fritzie close enough to snipe.

And think, Joe—I'm *wed* to this riot! Wow!

"Edouard, *ma cherie*!" she hollers back, and the next second we are clasped in a fondly embrace. This here Marie looks like she was gonna faint outa simple surprise and then beats it inside. The minute I can get my breath, I points over Jeanne's shoulder at the mob in the front rooms.

"What's all *this* stuff, hey?" I says.

"Ssh!" whispers Jeanne, puttin' a hand over my mouth, draggin' me into the bedroom and closin' the door. "It is but the small dinner dance. A few friends." She kisses me again, Joe, and then

starts draggin' my evenin's dress outa the bureau. "But wait then," she says, "you shall meet them all, *cherie!*"

I sit down on the bed and throwed my hat on a chair.

"Another party here, hey?" I growls. "What does them friends of yours think this is—Carnegie Hall? Don't they never give no blowouts no-where's but at *my* flat?"

Joe, she grabs hold of my coat and starts takin' it off.

"Hurry!" she smiles, "I will explain everything in not too long. Quick then—you must have the shave. I will tell Marie to prepare water and——"

"Who's Marie?" I says, whilst Jeanne yanks off my collar and tie like I was a infant baby or the etc.

"Marie?" says Jeanne. "Oh—she is our new *femme de chambre*. She is most excellent, no? And only seventy-five dollars a month!"

"Wow!" I hollers. "What d'ye mean *only*? Seventy-five berries, hey? How long since I been able to afford any seventy-five dollar maids, hey? I hadda ride in the subway to come up from the railroad station and you——"

"*Viola!*" says Jeanne, gettin' out my dress shirt. "Why then did you not 'phone Jeanne? I would have sent the chauffeur with the car!"

Oh, boy!!!

Joe, I jumped up off the bed like somebody had bellered "Fire!"

"*Chauffeur*?" I hollers, clawin' at my throat. "Since when have I had a *chauffeur*?"

"Ssh!" smiles Jeanne, handin' me my studs. "Of what use then is our motor car to Jeanne when Edouard is away? I have engage a mechanic of the finest with *tres bien* reference from everybody. He——"

"What are you givin' *this* burglar, before I fire him?" I butts in.

"Poof!" says Jeanne, powderin' her nose. "It is nothing. Forty dollars a week and——"

Joe, I staggered back and fell on the bed again. I am faint all over and I can feel myself turnin' pale around the gills.

"Listen!" I says, in a coldly and deadly voice. "Heaven must of put it into my head to come home now. How much have you got me in hock for already?"

She raises them million dollar eyebrows kinda puzzled.

"What do I owe and who, so far?" I explains.

"Oh!" she says, brightenin' up, "please let us not discuss money now, Edouard. My guests wait and I must go. There—everything is ready for you and Marie shall bring the water_for

the shave!" She gimme a chastely salute, Joe, and starts for the door. Before I went unconscious altogether, I nailed her.

"Wait!" I says, still very faint. "I have came all the way from Boston to see you alone and here you are givin' a party! Where is my baby?"

Joe, for a minute I was afraid she might of sold him or somethin' in order to get all this dough.

"Weelson sleeps," she says, "you shall see him to-morrow. He is in the most excellent health and has ask for you twice in the last month. If he is wake now, he will not sleep all night, *n'est ce pas ?*"

By this time, Joe, I am too overcome with the way things is breakin' to make even a mildly protest, but as Jeanne starts for the door again I says I am on the brink of starvation and can't I duck out to the ice box and grab off a snack of somethin' be it ever so humble and Jeanne says she will send Marie in with a bite which I can take on the fly whilst shavin' and at midnight on the dot a supper will be served by a cater.

Well, I am staggerin' around the room in a trance wonderin' where the jack is comin' from to pay for all this, includin' the supper from a cater which alone will prob'ly murder a hundred dollar bill, when they is a lightly rap at the door and I manage to breath come in and no less than the

charmin' Marie opens the door. She has got a a pitcher of hot water and a coupla towels with her and she makes me a present of all of 'em and says is they anything else, the while givin' me a odd look. I says where is the eats and she goes out and comes back again in a minute with a soup tureen full of the weirdest lookin' stuff I ever seen in my life. I took it over to the window and gazed at it from every angle but failed to identify it.

"What's this stuff?" I says to Marie.

"Oyster souffle, sir," she said.

"Did *you* make it?" I asks her.

Up goes her eyebrows.

"Indeed no, sir!" she says, increasin' cold with westerly winds agin, "I am not the cook!"

"Well who *did* make it—the chauffeur?" I says. She let forth a giggle.

"No sir," she says. "Marucci Sons and Company, Limited, are serving the supper, sir."

"Well that's tough," I says, "but I can't help it. Take this stuff back to them babies and anything they allow you on it is yours!"

She looks at me like I'm a half wit or the like, grabs up the dish and beats it.

Well, Joe, I then abandon myself to the art of shavin', but I'm so hungry I can't take no interest in it and after I have shaved off one side of my

face and relathered the other I can't stand it no longer, so I made up my mind I would sneak out to the ice box in the kitchen and maybe they is a odd pickle or somethin' left that will hold me over for the time bein'. No sooner said than done and when I cross the portals of the kitchen like a burglar on tip toe, there is Marie sittin' at the table and tiein' into a feast that would make a king's mouth water! Joe, she is eatin' nothin' less than corn's beef and cabbage with nice mealy boiled potatoes and etc. and even whilst I'm lookin' on she goes to the ice box and takes out a ear of corn and a big juicy dill pickle. Sweet Cookie—that's more than a starvin' human can stand! I let forth a terrible sigh and says,

“Psst! I'll give you five bucks on your next pay day for half that layout, Marie!”

Well, Joe, this here comin' outa a clear sky give the girl quite a start and she let forth a little screech when she seen me standin' there, not knowin' they was anybody else in the room. I musta been kinda unconventional lookin' at that, Joe, standin' there without no collar on, a razor in my hand and one side of my face all full of lather. She leaps up from the chair and I thought for a minute she was gonna take it on the run and prob'ly no doubt spread the alarm to the whole household, but I headed her off. With a few well

picked words I explained to her that I was practically starvin' and could not eat the oyster souffle thing come what may, but the deliciously feast she had laid out there, especially the corn's beef and cabbage which I am a hound for, would no doubt save my life. Joe, she looks around kinda frightened and I closed the door and says I will fix everything all right with Jeanne, her master, and please get a extry plate as soon as possible. Well, Marie looks at me for a minute like she's awful sorry for me and I put a world of pleadin' in my naturally emotionally eyes and then what does she do but burst out laughin' and says all right she will take a chance, but I gotta keep quiet and it prob'ly means the loss of her job.

In two minutes more I am seated at the table with my face half lathered, but what's the difference and I am goin' through that corn's beef and cabbage like prohibition went through the Home of the Brave. Marie is standin' by, gigglin,' and she ain't a bad looker and a pleasant time is bein' had by all. Reachin' for another pickle, I says, so's to make conversation:

"I'll see that you get well rewarded for this night's work, Marie, and——"

Joe—in walks Jeanne!

Sweet Cookie!

They was a dead silence. Marie got as white as

my \$14 dress shirt and one of the choicest bits of corn's beef I ever met fell off my fork on the floor. Jeanne's eyes was blazin' like a fire in a oil well and her cheeks was as red as the reflection. They is no doubt it was a critically situation, Joe, but I figured a boldly front might carry it off.

"Hello!" I says, lightly and with what I hoped and trusted was a innocent grin, "tell the boys and girls I'm sorry to keep 'em waitin', but a guy has got to eat. Is they any more cabbage, Marie?"

One of 'em dropped a pin and I heard it hit the floor!

"Go to your room, Marie!" says Jeanne, \$38 worth of ice on each word.

Marie beat the barrier, Joe. I'll say she went!

Jeanne then come over and stood by the table, where I was tryin' to hide behind the cabbage. My appetite departed for Siberia the same minute. When women looks half as pretty as Jeanne looked then they get in the Follies, when they look half as *mad* they bump somebody off!

"And now, Edouard——" says Jeanne.

Joe, I am tearin' this off in the writin' room of a hotel in the middle of the night, because I have been walkin' the streets in a terrible rage not to

mention a broken heart and etc. and the chances are the next thing you will hear is that I will be the correspondent in my own divorce case after all I have went through to make Jeanne happy. I have never done a wrong to no man, except he was a German in uneyform, but somebody, prob'ly the Crown's Prince, has put a curse on me and it looks like I will be a ravin's maniac in a few days. Joe, I am gonna lose Jeanne and if I do that will be the wind-up of me because I could do nothin' without her and if she thinks they ain't plenty of dames which is crazy to have me, her guesser needs a complete overhaulin' and I lived before I met her so I should be annoyed, hey, Joe? So don't be surprised if you read any day that a prominently ball player by the name of Ed. Harmon has bumped himself off. Don't show this letter to no one.

Joe, Jeanne is now a full fledge movie star!

My Gawd!

Hey, Joe?

A bell hop has just told me this is a hotel and not no Y. M. C. A. hut and unless I got a room here I got to take the air. I will give you all the foul details in my next.

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON. (A innocently
victim of love).

Riverside's Drive, N. Y.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, it certainly is the greatest thing in the world to be happily wed and a guy is silly to remain single after he has reached the age of reason. I am writin' this with Jeanne sittin' on the arm of my chair with one of *her* arms around me and her head so close to mine that it frequently distracts me from the matter at hand, as the general orders used to say. We have declared a married couple's armistice, which means only two days a week is to be give over to scrappin' and everything is now elegant once again. Before this was brung about though, Joe, I had to go through some terribly and heart breakin' adventures. Joe, my life has got to be now where it is just one adventure after the other and alongside of me, Robinson and Crusoe led uneventfully lives.

Well, after Jeanne caught me in the kitchen eatin' corn's beef and cabbage with the new maid Marie as a innocent bystander, they was quite a scene but by sayin' nothin' I managed to talk Jeanne out of it and anyways she had to cut it short on account of the guests all waitin' for us. I am immediately rushed into my evenin's dress and stand a final inspection by Jeanne, which won't let me go in 'til she has rubbed her powder puff over my manly and fresh shaved face to take the shine off of it.

Joe, I am a old veteran of them dinner dances and etc. now, on account of Jeanne havin' give several gross of 'em since we moved up to Riverside's Drive where Grant's Tomb and etc. holds forth, and I went through the introductions with the greatest of ease. I like these parties and pitchin' to Babe Ruth the same way, but bein' a pig for punishment I smiled on one and all and sit down in a corner between the two best lookin' dames on hand. Most of the birds which is soon goin' to tie into that dinner from the cater, I have met before and they is two in particularly which the night they are embalmed I will laugh myself sick no matter what I am doin' at the time. They are a guy named Frothingham which makes a auto that will never cause the Rolls-Royce people to close their doors and which I think is stuck on Jeanne and a movie director named Wright which I know is stuck on her and which I long ago made up my mind to knock for a goal at my earliest convenience.

Well, Joe, I am on needles and pins from the start of this thing to the finish and how bloodshed was avoided is past me. If I could only have the control on the diamond which I brought into play this night, I'd be *the* pitchin' sensation of baseball, instead of just *one* of 'em! When Jeanne wasn't dancin' with this Frothingham boob she was

dancin' with Wright and I didn't get a chance to say three words to her the entire evenin'. Manys the time I was on the brink of gettin' up and declarin' myself right out loud and trimmin' the both of 'em, but since I am learnin' the mysteries of bein' a gentleman I have got to deprive myself of them simple pleasures. Whenever I could catch Jeanne's eye I give her a look of coldly rage and she come back with shruggin' her shoulders and by the time they had all eat my cater's dinner and was ready to go, *I* was ready to eat nails! This here movie director lingered like a insurance agent and if he'd of stayed four seconds longer he wouldn't of had to of waited for no elevator because I had just about made up my mind to take a chance and throw him through the window when he fin'ly left, sayin':

"And don't forget, Mrs. Harmon—rehearsal tomorrow is at ten!"

The door had hardly closed on him when I nailed Jeanne.

"What's this rehearsal thing, hey?" I says, tryin hard to hold myself in.

Jeanne gimme a funny look and goes over to the bureau. She opens a drawer, takes out a circular and hands it to me. I read three lines, Joe, and collapsed in a nearby chair gaspin' like a fish for breath. Here's what this thing says:

\$100,000 Photo-Craft Production.

JEANNE DE LA VERNE

(MRS ED. HARMON)

IN

THE DEVIL'S BRIDE

Sweet Cookie!

"What the—what does this here mean?" I hollers, when I could talk at all. "What——"

Jeanne smiles and comes over to me.

"Ssh!" she says, smoothin' back my hair. "You will wake Weelson. If you will have but the little patience, *cheri*, Jeanne will explain everything. I meant it for the delightful surprise. Indeed you should be proud of your little Jeanne, no? See—she is now the grand actress like—like Charles Pickford and Douglas Chaplin, *n'est ce pas?*"

"D'ye mean to say this here is *level?*" I yells, wavin' the circular.

Jeanne sits on the arm of my chair and puts her hand over my mouth.

"You shall say nothing 'til I tell all!" she says. "It is then of this way. Jeanne does not like to sit home all alone by herself while Edouard is away with the baseball. Ha!" she pinches my

arm and winks. "Did I not then tell you to give up that? Well, after I have the small part in that picture, 'Twas Her Own Fault' and you make such holler about it, Monsieur Wright he come to me and say I am the natural actress and everybody know of me now, because your friend Joe present those newspapers with your letters of me and also Monsieur Wright say I am very, very pretty and——"

"I'll murder *that* bird!" I butts in, jumpin' up.

"Please to remain seated!" says Jeanne. "It is nothing. Monsieur Wright is the splendid gentleman. He too likes this baseball and knows all about you. He himself told me you were wonderful. He is not too attentive to Jeanne, *non, non*, just—ah—nice. To him everything is business, nothing more. Besides, *ma cheri*, you should know your Jeanne! Well, he offer me a contract for ten thousand dollars a year and ten per cent. of what the picture makes and I say *non, non, non*, because I think you will be angry. Then he say fifteen thousand and I say I must think. Then he say twenty thousand and fifteen per cent. and *cheri*, what would you? I sign! The first picture——"

By this time I got enough!

"That's where all this jack is comin' from, hey?" I says. "Well tear that contract up! I didn't

marry no movie star and I'm able to take care of you without you doin' no manual labor. I didn't think you'd take the advantage of me the minute I went on the road, but I see women is all alike. This guy Kiplin' had 'em pegged right. 'A fool there was and he said his prayers, just like me and you, Gunga Din!' Well, I ain't gonna be no fool in this case, I'll tell the world! What d'ye wanna go in the movies for anyways? Look what the movies done to Jess Willard!"

Jeanne says nothin'.

"Look here, Jeanne!" I says. "We might as well get this over and be done with it. I don't like this stuff you're pullin' on me a little bit. I may be a roughneck, but I'm level! The movie thing has got to go—or *I* do! You got a good home, a baby and me. I'm willin' to hustle for you, I'm willin' to study English so's I won't shock your highbrow friends, which wouldn't know either you or me if *I* hadn't got over. And whilst I think of it, what's this guy Frothingham hangin' around for? There's *one* baby I'm gonna knock kickin' to-morrow!"

Again Jeanne smiles.

"It is nothing!" she says. "Monsieur Frothingham marries next week Mademoiselle Van Arkwright, the young lady who ask you to dance with her to-night. Edouard, but you are still

just one big baby—and Jeanne loves you for it! But you must listen. Jeanne will not be the housewife and get fat and dumpy and—and lose you. I can be then in the moving pictures and still love *mon* Edouard. Between us we can make *beaucoup* francs for little Weelson and I will get you away from those vulgar baseball. You shall do something else—Jeanne will think of that too. We shall have our country villa and—and you shall play goff and—and—everything, *n'est ce pas?*”

She took hold of my head, Joe, and looked me right in the eyes and as usually I got dizzy, but remained firm.

“No!” I says. “No wife of mine is gonna be no movie queen!” I grabbed my hat, Joe, and started for the door, evenin’s dress and all. “Good-bye forever!” I hollers, very hoarse and dramatical—and beat it.

Joe, after walkin’ around the streets for about a hour I went in the nearest hotel and wrote you that last letter which relieved my wounded feelin’s to a considerably extent. Then I went back to my ex-flat so’s I could get enough clothes to jump out and join the team again. I was firmly determined that this here was *one* time I was gonna have my way and I would show Jeanne just how strong minded and masterfully I could be if necessary.

I rung the bell as viciously as possible and no less than Jeanne opens the door. She give a gasp and they was signs of the weeps in her eyes, but even then she looked like a million dollars.

“Edouard!” she says, with a glance that would of made Nero throw away his fiddle, “and the first day you come back to me you would leave me alone?”

Joe, they is no doubt I’m a simp, but I leave it to you what I did!

Well, Joe, whilst dressin’ the next mornin’ I got a idea. Jeanne won’t have it no other way but that I go out to the studio with her where this picture is bein’ made and at first I don’t wanna go, but now I dragged out the best of everything which goes to make up my rather extensive wardrobe. I laid myself out to be a knockout and when I was ready for the street I was a genuine treat for the eye as far as clothes was concerned anyways. You know, Joe—panama turned up at a tricky angle, white silk shirt, blue coat, white flannel pants and white buckskin shoes. To complete the illusion I carried a cane. Sweet Cookie—if I didn’t look like ready money, then neither does the U. S. Mint! Jeanne raised her eyebrows when she seen me, but beyond her usual mornin’ kiss, she says nothin’.

Once out to the studio, I blowed right over to



“‘What the—what does this here mean?’ I hollers, when
I could talk at all”

the director's office. Before goin' further I wanted to see for myself if "Monsieur Wright" was level and "all business" like Jeanne said. Well, Joe, in half a hour's talk, this guy was solid with me for life! Why the poor boob's wed and got six kids and is regular if anybody is, apart from that. He knowed how I felt about Jeanne bein' in the movies, but in five minutes he showed me that they wasn't a thing wrong with it. When we left his office we was callin' each other by our first names and he says did I notice they was usin' *my* name on the advertisin' for Jeanne's first picture. I says I seen where it said somethin' about "Mrs. Ed. Harmon" and he says that's it and the reason Jeanne was such a big card for the movies was because she happened to be **THE WIFE OF ED. HARMON!**

Oh, boy! The next time Jeanne throws out her chest, there's a ace for *me*, hey, Joe?

Well, I says, I am convinced that everything is open and above the board, but I can't stand the idea of seein' some big stiff movie hero puttin' his arms around Jeanne and the first time I do they better get seven huskies to hold me. Joe, he starts to laugh and then he stops off short and grabs my arm.

"By Jove!" he hollers. "I know how to prevent that. How would *you* like to go into the

movies and play opposite your wife? Listen to me—we draw up a contract for you and Mrs. Harmon to make a series of pictures together, as soon as your baseball season is over? I must have been asleep or I'd have thought of this before. You'll screen beautifully, too! Think—Ed. Harmon and Jeanne in—Oh hell, *in anything!* C'mere!"

Joe, I am dragged over to the office again before I know what it's all about and on the way we pick up Jeanne which is tickled silly at the idea and kisses me right out loud in public and between them they get me to sign a lease or somethin' for five years in the movies, beginnin' when my baseball contract runs out and if I told you what we was gonna get together, you'd only call me a liar!

Can you imagine me bein' a movie star, Joseph old deah? I bet Chaplin will take carbolic after seein' the first picture I'm in, hey?

Well, I ain't done yet what I come out to do in my fancy scenery, Joe, and I didn't forget it in the excitement. I am introduced to all the dames out there and they have all heard about me and none of 'em acts like they also heard I had small pox. In a minute I am completely surrounded by the fair's sex and I commence to vamp 'em one and all and write my name on cards for 'em and Jeanne watches it in deadly silence 'til one of 'em

offers to show me through the studio. At this critically point, Jeanne takes my arm and leads me away and I didn't forget to wave back at the dames and say I'd be around later.

Joe, that was the last day of Jeanne's picture and even whilst she was actin' she kept her eyes on me and every time she did I managed to be talkin' to some dame.

Well, all the way home in the car she clung to me like the ivy and says I will never get outa her sight again and that some women is bold enough for anything.

I'm joinin' the team at Pittsburg and Joe—
Jeanne goes with me !

Yours truly,
ED. HARMON. (The male Vampire).

A 156 Pa 9 Pittsburg, Pa. 6.02p. Collect.

JOE MURPHY:

Yonkers, N. Y.

Trimmed Pittsburg 6 to 0 only gave two hits. Jeanne seen me make 'em like it. Will send you working press seats for my first movie has Mary Pickford made any howl?

ED. HARMON.

CHAPTER IV

SO THIS IS CINCINNATI!

FOURTH INNING

On The Board of a Train.

MON CHÈRE SEÑORITA JOE: (*You can see I am now the master of beaucoup languages—hey, Joe?*)

Your last letter folleyed me hithers and yon, as we are wonted to remark at the studio, and fin'ly caught up with me at no less than St. Looey, the burg which is makin' a neck-and-neck race of it with the Phillies in the National League—for the last place. The reason the letter had such a time of it runnin' me down is due to the sensationally fact that I am now with Pat Moran's dumfoundin' crew of merry men, knowed as the Cincinnati Reds, which has staggered all Europe by grabbin' off the flag for the first time in fifty years. Joe, I have been with these babies just long enough to get into and prob'ly win the world's series for 'em, and the fact that they was able to get *me* only goes on to show the dumb luck they been playin' in all season.

Moran goes around all day long grinnin' from the one ear to another, and I'll bet when I stride forth on the field in a nonchalantly manner to hurl my first game at home for the Reds, I will get a reception from the Cincinnati fans which would make the one Pershing suffered when he come back sound like he was presented with the cold's shoulder—hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, I will tell you how come I am prowlin' around with the Reds, when the last reliably information you got I was garb in the nobby uney-form of New York. It happened like water off a duck's back, Joe, and I was gave nothin' in the way of a inklin' as to what was gonna befall unto me till Mac nails me in the hotel at Pittsburgh.

"If I had your boob luck," he says, "I would take a chance and run for umpire in the League of Nations!"

"What has came to pass now?" I says. "Is the owners thinkin' of makin' me a present of somethin'?"

"Yeh," he says with a maliciously grin. "The gate!"

Joe, for the moment I am too wild to even *think* of speakin'. Can you imagine *me* gettin' the raspberry from *anywheres*?

"Whilst you are standin' there grinnin' like a hysterically ape," I says in a coldly and deadly voice,

"I am hereby, to wit, servin' notice that a few of my lawyers will call on the president of the club to-morrow and will undoubtedly begin suit before nightfall. See if you can get a laugh outa that!"

"Wait!" says Mac. "Wait till I tell you where you're headed for from here. You're goin' to the Reds, you big stiff, and that means you'll prob'ly be made a present of a slice of that world's series sugar. I tell you, if Columbus had only got the breaks you're gettin', he'd of discovered Chicago and Boston the first day out!"

Well, Joe, that was all different, hey? Climbin' aboard the Reds when they ain't no more chance of them losin' the pennant than they is of Hades facin' a blizzard, is sweet, I'll shriek to old mother's earth!

Still and all, it ain't no more than I am entitled after the way I have worked to make baseball popular with the mob since I first laid hands on a bat. However, Joe, I managed to keep my head as cool as Jan. 10 in Alaska, and I says:

"Well, Mac, no doubt I may be made to see my way clear to joinin' the Reds so's to bolster them up, but first of all I demand half of my purchase price. I know the sum Pat Moran laid down for me must sound like it was the population of China, or you guys would never of let me go. Gimme half what they paid for me in cash, and——"

Mac looked at me for a minute and then he bust out into some more idiotical laughter.

"Fair enough!" he says. "Here's half what Moran is willin' to pay to git you in a Cincinnati uneyform, so's the fans will have somethin' to laugh at durin' the world's series!"

With that he reaches in his pocket and hands me a thin dime!

"I been doin' nothin' but dickerin' with Moran for weeks," he says, "to try and jack him up to a quarter, but they was nothin' stirrin'. However, you got half your purchase price in money now, and we are gettin' two outfielders for you likewise. One of 'ems called Deering, which comes somewheres from the Coast. I will give you him if you want, and you can use him for a watch charm or the like. Then you won't have no moan comin', because you will have got half of everything *we* got for you!"

Joe, I flang the dime on the floor and was on the brinks of bustin' him in the nose when just like a flash it come to me that I am learnin' the arts of bein' a gentlemen now in order to delight my deliciously wife, Jeanne, and one of the first rules is that you cannot clout nobody in public, and, besides, Mac is far from a clown with his fists. So I drawed myself up with the greatest of dignity and gazed upon Mac like Jeanne's French maid

gazes upon each and all of my friends. That is, i. e., and viz., like they was mere buzzards under her feet.

"I don't wish to bring about no bloodshed," I says, "so I won't argy with you no further. *You'll* get what's comin' to you, anyways, when you get back to New York. Wait till them fans hears that you have sold me to some other club—it'll no doubt seem to you like it was rainin' nothin' but bottles and cushions the first day you walk on the field!"

"I'll take a chance!" says Mac with a sarcastical grin. "Anyways, I'll have company. The day the Cincinnati fans finds out Moran has wished you on the Reds, he'll be pagin' the National Guard to escort him home from the ball park!"

So you see, Joe, we parted on the best of terms, and even *you* can realize that Mac was only kiddin' like that to hide his real feelin's over me leavin' the club.

It must of been a terrible blow, and I understand the New York newspapers gave over page after page to pannin' Mac for lettin' me go, and the attendance at the Polo Grounds fell away to such a extent that the crowd could all of come out to the park on the same bicycle.

Well, Joe, I went around sayin' good-by to the rest of the club, which could hardly believe their

eyes when they heard I was leavin', and was all broke up over it.

Fletcher and Burns had all they could do to keep from bustin' right out cryin', and says they will miss me like a jockey would miss his arms, on account of me always bein' the life of the party and etc.

Benny Kauff claims they oughta start a mutiny and refuse to play no ball at all, like the Athletics prob'ly decided at the beginnin' of the season, and even Zimmerman says it's a outrage for Mac to let me go now, when he could of done it months ago.

They says they will all be at the world's series to see me pitch my first game, and if the White Sox gets eleven runs off of me in the first innin', not to let it get my goat and etc.

Then Young speaks up and says if they had only of known it a little sooner that I was gonna be sold they would of all chipped together and bought me somethin' to recall them by, but four months' notice hardly gave them a chance to save enough, what with the high cost of livin' and the like.

Joe, I only heard that day that I was sold, so how could Young of knowed it four months ago? I guess he was so grief struck he didn't know *what* he was sayin', hey?

Well, Joe, then Snyder tells me that he has got it

from reliable information that the Reds gave \$86,000 and five players for me, and I am a idiotical simp if I don't hold out for half the jack. Well, I thought they was no use lettin' him know how Mac had took the advantage of me by liein' about my purchase price, because it would no doubt only make the rest of the gang enraged, and they might lay for him in the clubhouse some day and tear him limb and limb, and his blood would always be hangin' over my head. He has did me a lotta favors in one way and the other, and if he wants to gyp me outa one half of \$86,000, which as near as I can make it is \$43,000, let him do it. I would rather have my self's respect any day than 1-10 of that amount, and, anyways, I owe him \$32.60 from a pinochle pogrom in Pittsburg, and let him try and get it now!

I am just leavin' the clubhouse, Joe, when Rube Benton calls me to one side with a sorrowfully face. He shakes my hand and turns away his head, and I could of swear they is a tear stealin' its way down his cheek.

"Well, good-by, Ed, old scout," he says, waggin' his head. "Mac may be doin' what he thinks is the right thing, but I would hate to have his conscience to sleep with! The idea of takin' a big, strong, young feller like you and makin' a hop-head outa him for a few dirty dollars!"

“What’s the idea?” I says with naturally enough surprise. “What d’ye mean a hophead, hey?”

“Are you gonna join the Cincinnati Reds—or ain’t you?” he asks solemnly.

“I’ll say I am!” I says. “Where does that hophead stuff come in?”

“What?” hollers Rube, jumpin’ away. “D’ye mean to stand there and make the claim you don’t know?”

I nodded my head, Joe, and I commence to smell some rats. Rube Benton wouldn’t be that seriously with me for nothin’. “Hey!” hollers Rube to the rest of the gang. “He don’t know what he’s goin’ up against with the Reds—can you tie that!”

They all come gatherin’ around me, shakin’ their heads and gazin’ upon me like I was about to get en route for the embalmers instead of Cincinnati, which ain’t *that* dead no matter what the knockers claims.

“Well,” says Rube, “if Mac ain’t man enough to tell you—I will! Did you know that Pat Moran has been tryin’ all season to buy pretty near everybody on this club and has offered kings’ ransoms and sums that would dumfound all Asia for us? No—hey? Mac is supposed to be a personally friend of yours, and yet you ain’t even got a spoonful of any of this here inside stuff!

D'ye know that we have all swore that we would rather spend the rest of our lives playin' semi-pro ball than join the Reds? D'ye know——”

“Wait a minute!” I butts in. “What's all this got to do with me bein' a hophead if *I* go with 'em, hey?”

“Ah, hah!” hollers Rube like a villain from the movies. “It's got *everything* to do with it! What d'ye suppose has made them Cincinnati Reds go crazy this year and win the pennant, when for over forty years they thought the world's series died out with Lincoln?”

I shook my head in the negatively.

“Dope!” bawls Rube, dancin' around. “Dope!”

“Dope?” I says, gettin' dizzy. “What——what——”

“Sure——dope!” says Rube. “That's what them guys is bein' fed on night and day. Why, everybody in the league knows that from the day Moran dropped a bill outa his pocket in St. Looey which was for \$300 worth the opium! Did you ever watch 'em on the diamond? Them babies ain't got no more idea what they're doin' than a gang of maniacs! Their eyes is all glassy and they keep mumblin' all the time to themselves. I tell you Moran has been shootin' 'em full of hooch all season, and them guys is so charged up that half

the time they wander all over the streets, and Moran carries a whole slew of detectives to folley them up and lead 'em out to the park every day! Wait till you get to Cincinnati. The first thing Moran will do is to give you a jab in the arm and make you pitch a double-header! Pretty soon you'll be a dope fiend, and next year they wouldn't let you into a big league game if you had a ticket!"

Benny Kauff and two other guys walks outside coughin', and I suppose they couldn't stand to listen to my terribly fate no longer. Joe, I did commence to feel a trifle nervously—they's no doubt about that!

"Are you sure you ain't got it balled up?" I says after a minute of the most deadly silence. "It looks to me that instead of Cincinnati bein' doped, somebody has gone to work and gave sleepin' powders to the *other* seven clubs. When *you* was in there yesterday you give me the idea that you had eat a dish of veronal for lunch, especially them two times you was caught off first by over four miles and——"

"Kid about it if you like!" says Rube. "I'm only tryin' to do you a favor. In a coupla weeks they will be more holes in your arm than they is in your delivery—and that's sayin' a lot!"

"Well," I says, "Moran ain't gonna get no dope into me! I don't need to be charged up to win no

games, and if them guys will only give a imitation of a baseball team in back of me, the world's series is cinched!"

"For the White Sox!" says Benton. "Well, I'll be out there the day you work, watchin' you."

"Wave and holler to me, Rube," I says, "so's I'll know where's to look for you."

"I'll be away up in the grand stand," he says. "The first pitch you make you'll notice me without no trouble, as I will no doubt be the guy which is duckin' the pill!"

Joe, can you imagine the petty jealousy of them guys? I have made less wild pitches to the game than any guy which makes wild pitches *every* game this season!

Well, Joe, I went over to the hotel, and there is a cable for me from Moran to report at once in St. Looney, which is a terribly jump from Pittsburg and sleepin' cars is poison ivy to me, and I'll take the short end of a bet that not even Rip Van's Rinkle could pound his ear in the upper birth of no train!

I told you in my last, Joe, that Jeanne had come up with me for the Pittsburg series and seen me inshoot them babies to death, winnin' my first start by the remarkably score of 6 to the thing they build the ring around in a doughnut. The clerk give out that Jeanne was in the main's dinin'

room, so I went right in to break the news to her that I was off to the haunts of the Cincinnati Reds. I didn't get no immediately chance to spill my startlin' information, because after one brief flash at me Jeanne sent me to the showers. She is all dolled up like the queen of the New Orleans Marty Grass with evenin's dress and the like, and if she didn't look like a million dollars, then neither does two \$500,000 bills. Joe, if Jeanne continues to get prettier every day, like she has made it a rule to do since we left France, it ain't gonna be long before I won't be able to stand it! If Jeanne had lived in Marks & Anthony's time, this Cleopatra dame would never of been heard tell of. What I wanted to do after one look was to plant a chastely salute on them lips of hers, which is as red as a thousand dollars' worth the catsup; but, Joe, I done that once at the ball park, and Jeanne won't speak to me for forty-eight hours on the grounds that a gentlemen don't kiss his wife whilst the public looks on. Well, I draw the conclusions that a gentlemen no doubt prob'ly kisses some other gentlemen's wife, and that's a thing I never felt called upon to do since I been wed. If you had cake, would you crave bread? No! And there's *that!*

Well, what I got chased this time for was because Jeanne says how many times has she told me

I gotta dress for dinner when I am at chow with her, and nobody but a laber wouldst walk right into his dinner without groomin' himself up, whatever that is, but I think it's got somethin' to do with a horse, Joe, as I know a groom in New York personally and he does the majority of his groomin' in a livery stable. Well, to make a paragraph outa a novel, I went upstairs and climbed into my banquet overalls and etc., and come down again, and this time Jeanne is all smiles. When Jeanne is all smiles, Joe, she could tell Rockefeller they was no more market for oil, and he'd remark: "I should worry!" and *mean* it! I seen people lookin' over at our table in openly admiration, because I am a knockout in evenin's dress, Joe, and Jeanne would make Venus take carbolic, and I guess they was all sayin': "There's the world's famous Ed Harmon, the ball player, and his wife, the notoriously movie star!" The head waiter takes my order himself and I ain't very hungry, bein' satisfied to simply look at Jeanne, which claims I must take somethin', even if it's only a trifle *potage*. (*Potage*, Joe, is French slang for soup.)

"All right!" I says to this guy, which has got out a book and a pencil and is takin' down everything I say like they has been a accident, and it turned out that I was the only witness. "Bring forth some consomme's soup!"

"Very good, sir!" he says, not that I asked him about it. "Will you have something with the soup?"

"Yeh," I says. "I'd at least like a plate with it!"

At this point Jeanne, which can't see into kiddin' waiters, chopped me off and sent him on his way with a coldly nod. Before I can spring my surprise on her she leans over and says I have got to get it arranged in some way so's I can leave for New York with her that night! The reason for this is that the movin'-picture company which Jeanne is actin' for wants her right aways to finish up a important scene in "The Devil's Bride," and every day she is away is costin' 'em *beaucoup* pennies on account of all the rest of the cheaper help standin' around idle and etc. Well, Joe, you no doubt remember I told you I had signed a lease with the same company to turn into a actor so's me and Jeanne could work together and make Fairbanks and Mary Pickford cry their eyes out with simple envy. We are gonna get enough jack for this to pay for a shave for every guy in Russia, and the letter Jeanne got says the guy which is writin' the pictures for us has got the foundations sunk for the first one, and nothin' will do but I must come on and read it.

Well, Joe, I says it is impossibly for me to go to

New York with her because I have been sold to the Cincinnati Reds.

"*Viola!*" she remarks, narrowly missin' drop-pin' her knife. "What do you mean? Sold? How then could *mon Edouard* be sold?"

With that, Joe, she looked at me like she thought the lucky shopper which had bought me might come along at any minute and snatch me away.

"Well," I says, "it's like this. A ball player is somethin' like a cattle and can be put on the market at any time and auctioned off to the highest bidder. I think Uncle Tom must of been a pitcher. In this case, Cincinnati grabbed me off and I gotta report there at once, or even sooner if I can get away. This will ease me into the world's series and, naturally enough, that means a bucketful of extry jack for your little Edward. I should draw down anywheres from four to eight thousand fish, and I'll sink the plurality of it into a present for you! How's that?"

"Eight thousand feesh?" she says, her eyes openin' and sparklin' till if you could of set 'em in a bracelet you could hock the same for what Germany owes. "What, then, Edouard, would Jeanne do with eight thousand of the feesh?"

"Well," I says, with a sarcastically grin, "call up J. P. Morgan and ask *him*. That baby's got 800

times eight thousand fish and they ain't givin' *him* no trouble!"

From merely lookin' at her, Joe, I seen she didn't get me, so I explained that fish is simply a alias for money, which in turn is slang for dough, kale, dinero, jack, sugar, iron men, gelt, long green, rocks, berries and the etc.

Jeanne fails to stage a faint when she realizes what I am talkin' about.

"Poof!" she says. "What then is eight thousand *fillet de sole*—ah—feesh—to Jeanne and Edouard? We do not need that insignificant amount now—*non, non, non!* I am inform I will have fifty thousand dollar from this one picture alone and when they make the picture of *you, mon Edouard*—oo la la! Then we will have *beaucoup* francs for Jeanne and little Weelson, *n'est-ce pas?*"

Well, Joe, that remark about "little Weelson" remind me of somethin'.

"By the ways," I says, "how *is* my baby gettin' along? It seems to me like you are so fill up with this movie stuff that you ain't got no time for the world's greatest infant. Here he is only startin' off his second year on the earth and he is left home with nobody to look after him but a maid and a chauffeur, which what do they know about raisin' young infant babies?"

Jeanne laughed.

“*Tu es charmant!*” she says, leanin’ over and pinchin’ my cheek. “Indeed then you are but the big baby yourself, *mon petit Edouard*. I have the letter from Marie to-day and she say Weelson is magnificent and she have him make those kiss on the bottom of the letter just for you—see!”

With that she hands me the letter from the maid and right on the bottom is a lotta stuff that looks like a doctor’s prescription or else a Chinese laundry check, but instead it’s kisses from my baby which you can hardly expect him to write novels and etc. at the age of thirteen months.

Well, Joe, the more I looked at that the more I wanted to see him and talk to him if only for a day. Of course we can’t discuss the League of Nations and the like together on account of his entire language bein’ made up of words like “Ump goof urk bla suey wump goo,” and like that, which of course I knowed what that meant when I was a infant baby myself but have completely forgot it by this time. Jeanne watches me lookin’ at the letter and fin’ly she says:

“So you see, *mon cherie*, you will then have to come right back to New York with Jeanne to-night. You shall hold Weelson and you shall see Jeanne’s new moving picture and—and—everything! Come, *cherie*, Jeanne asks you!”

Well, Joe, I leave it to you what I done.

After I have paid our bill at the hotel, the amount of which sounds exactly like the taxi fare to Egypt, I went down to the railroad's station and bought two tickets, with pullman's sleepers and etc., for New York. Then I wrote another telegram to Pat Moran sayin' that owin' to a sudden change in my wife's plans, it would be impossibly for me to join the Reds for another day, but not to wait for me and go right on playin' out the schedule, the same as if I was there. I only hope he didn't go to work and advertise that I was gonna pitch the first game in St. Looey, because then he would no doubt have to refund the fans' money and that would make him sore at me from the go in, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, after a tiresomely trip on account of me not being able to pound my ear in no sleepin' car, but instead havin' to sit up all night in the club's car with four so-called travelin' salesmen, which they never in their lives held nothin' worse than a full house, we fin'ly arrived in New York. My automobile and chauffeur, which I need the same way as I need a toothache, met us at the station and we was drove home.

Joe, you oughta flash my baby now—Sweet Cookie, but he is *some* eyeful! He's as bright as twenty-seven ark lights, and as good-lookin' as a thousand dollars a week would be to a shippin'

clerk. Naturally enough, he's nuts over his big, handsome father, and cries wildly when they wanna take him away from me. Of course, Joe, he does the same when I take him, and all durin' the while I got him, so that evens it up a bit, or otherwise, I suppose, Jeanne would be battlin' with the green-eye monsters of jealousy. His head is shaped perfect, and not like no egg, as some young babies is at first, and taking him by the large, he's the most beautifully thing I ever seen in my life and the livin' image of his father!

Well, they's one thing I got all settled with myself, as far as my baby is concerned, and that is when he grows up he ain't goin' to be no ball player, not that ball playin' ain't a honorably trade, and like that, and I have met many's the players which knowed more about the English language, algeometry, etc., than the guys which owned the club. But I want my boy to turn into a lawyer or a doctor, or even President of the U. S. if he has to, but at least somethin' where they is no limit to the fame and jack he can make and where he will be his own boss and not have to take orders from no man. Joe, he ain't gonna start off life with the handicaps *I* had if I can help it, even if I did fin'ly come through in good shape on account of luckily bein' born near the horseshoe curve in Pa. My baby is gonna do his hitch in one of them

colleges where when they play football it gets on the front page of the papers, and he's gonna mingle with the best, and etc., I want him to come out with a lot of letters after his name like, "B. A., C. O. D., S. O. S., P. D. Q., O. K.," and etc., and I'm layin' by all the jack I can so's he can do it up brown.

And, Joe, if the next baby I have turns out to be a girl, it'll be the same ways with her, and I will give them both a good start, or *all* of them, as the cases may be, and there's *that* !

Well, Joe, after bein' up all night, I wanted to go right to bed, or into the arms of Morphine, as it says in one of the books I am studyin' English from. But Jeanne won't have it no other way but that I gotta go right out to the movie studio with her. I fin'ly talk her into goin' out first and I will be out in a hour after I have had a cold shower with ham and eggs and etc., to freshen me up. We parted as long and as kissin'ly as if she was settin' forth to try and discover the North Pole, instead of just goin' up in Westchester's County where they commit them movies.

What do I do, Joe, but fall asleep in the bath's tub and the chauffeur wakes me up by tryin' to break down the door, so I got to get dressed and he hustles me up to the studio and between thinkin' what a wonderfully thing it is for me to be ridin'

around New York in a swell auto and a chauffeur, and that after this year I am through with baseball forever, I fall asleep again, and don't wake up till we get to the studio, at which point I am dreamin' that Mary Pickford and Chaplin is beggin' me piteously for a job.

Well, in a minute I am in the midst of the actors and they all recognize me at once, prob'ly because I always wear a soft collar, and they begin shakin' my hands and etc. The swell lookin' vampires and prosecuted female heroes also buzzes around me and claims I will be a riot in my first picture. One of the despicably villains which pursues the innocently young and purely factory girl for from \$75 to \$250 a week, gimme a wink and says he knows a near-by place which is treatin' prohibition as a josh and everybody is havin' the loveliest of times, when I think of Jeanne. I ask where she is, and a vampire which would of made Samson forget all about Delia says:

"Mrs. Harmon is doing the scene that winds up the third reel of 'The Devil's Bride.' Say—would you like to see her act without her knowing you are here? C'mon; it'll be a good joke on her!"

Well, Joe, that's what it was. But not only was it a good joke on Jeanne, but it was likewise a good joke on me and a guy named Henry Ravenswood, too.

I folleyed this dame back through a lotta scenery, and she is puttin' one finger on her mouth and tellin' everybody not to say nothin', and they all tiptoed after us to satisfy their curiosity and the like. Fin'ly we come to a drawin'-room scene, and we stand to one side where the inmates of the same can't see us. It must of cost at least a million dollars to furnish this room, but money is the same as sawdust to a movie company, which manys the time really does blow \$50,000 on one of them \$200,000 productions. Well, Joe, Jeanne is in there, and as usually she is lookin' like what the other movie queens would give their right lung for if they could only look that way for even five minutes. They is a big husky there with her, and they are havin' a hot argument about somethin' whilst the camera men is grindin' away like mad.

"Who's that guy?" I says to the dame beside me.

"Sssh!" she whispers. "That's Henry Ravenswood. He's playing opposite Mrs. Harmon in this picture. Don't let us make any noise—he's awfully temperamental, and the least little thing sends him up in the air. Why——"

Joe, I didn't get to hear the rest, for the reason that at this here point Henry Ravenswood lets out a beller and walks across to Jeanne, which shivers away like she was scared to death at him. He

immediately grabbed hold of Jeanne and begin to choke her, and, naturally enough, Joe, I was in that room in two jumps and knocked him dead!

Well, at that, Joe, everybody got temperamental, but the guy which was directin' the movie got the most temperamental of all. He raved around, pullin' his hair and claimin' I have runed a scene which will have to be retook, and why do they let ravin's maniacs in the studio, and a lotta guys starts on the doubtfully job of bringin' Henry Ravenswood back to life.

Speakin' of Jeanne, she fainted the second I landed on Henry Ravenswood's jaw, and when she come to she gimme a bawlin' out I will remember word for word long after I have forgot my own name. They was only one guy seemed to take any interest in me, and that was a little bird which I found out afterward was a assistant director, and he slaps me on the back and says he is much obliged to me on account of Henry Ravenswood bein' a fathead, which had that comin' to him for a long time.

Well, I am coolin' off a trifle, Joe, and it would take a guy much stupider than me, if that's posible, not to realize I have in some way did somethin' all wrong. Nevers the less, I can't help it. They is no man gonna lay hands on my wife whilst I am lookin on, let him be a movie villain or not, hey, Joe?

In the midst of all this, which was the same as bedlam, Mr. Wright, which is the foreman of all the directors and a friend of mine, comes in, and after gettin' the box score of what's come off he laughs and helps straighten things up. He says maybe they can work the whole thing as a scene into one of my pictures on account of the camera men havin' gone right on turnin' and took it all. Well, I look around, and from what I can see I noticed they was more sympathy showed Belgium, for instance, than is bein' wasted on Henry Ravenswood; but Mr. Wright says if I wanna be a good guy I will apologize to Henry and tell him it was all a mistake. Which same I did whilst Henry was still sittin' on the floor, and he shook my hand, kinda dazed, and muttered like he didn't yet know what it was all about.

Joe, between me and Mr. Wright we calmed off Jeanne, and then we went into his office and I read over what I am supposed to do in my first picture. Well, all I can say is that the guy which tore off this here sceneryaro must have been a incurable ravin's maniac at the least. It is in five reels, but I figure I will only appear in the first reel, Joe, because they ain't *no* man can do *half* the things that guy has mapped out for *me* and live. Mr. Wright says all right, they will tone it down a little, but first step out into the studio and they

will see how I screen. After they have took several pictures Mr. Wright says I will be O. K. if only I will learn not to face the camera, but just look natural and away from it when he tells me. He says that what he's gonna do is to send out some camera men when I am pitchin' some day without tellin' me a word about it, and have them take shots at me whilst I don't know they are there, and in that way they'll get real flashes of me in action, which is what they want and not no posin' or tryin' to act, and etc.

Well, Joe, before I left he gimme a copy of the sceneryaro for me to read and memorize so's I will know what to do when the time comes right after the world's series, because they want to cash on me quick whilst I am in the public's eyes, and etc.

I will tell you all about how I am makin' out with the Reds and the like in my next, although naturally the papers will be full of it by then, hey, Joe?

Yours Truly,

ED HARMON (the new Mary Pickford).

On The Ways Home From Cincinnati.

“MON CHER TRES BIEN JOSE” (I betcha you ain't got the most slightly idea what that means, hey?)

I am at the loss how to begin this here letter, and I know it has been so long since you heard from me

except through the papers, which is only second-hand heresay, that prob'ly you think I have forgot how to handle a pen and ink well. Well, Joe, most doubtlessly you have read how I lose the first game I pitch for the Reds in the world's series and how they was a riot and etc. at the game, and I have been panned to a fare-thee-well from the rock's bound coast of Maine to the sunny shores of Alaska. Joe, I will now give you the inside dope on this terrible thing which befell unto me, and the whole thing boiled down to a nutshell is that I was the victims of foul's play and the movies.

I will start from the beginnin', Joe, and tell you what has made me the laughin's stock of North America, and the answer to it all is that a guy can't do two things at the one time and do the both of 'em right, and I should of stuck to either baseball or the movies and be done with it!

Well, Joe, I joined the Reds at St. Looey, and on the way out in the train I read this here sceneryaro of the first picture I am gonna grace for the Photo Craft Company, and I'll say it's a cuckoo! As I understand it, I am supposed to be a famously pitcher and wildly in love with the daughter of the boob which owns my team. Well, we need one game to win the pennant, and I am gonna work in that game, and the despicably cur of a villain has got it framed so I lose. It seems that in the ninth

innin' I get a double and as I slide into second the villain, which is playin' that bag tries to spike me; but at the risk of her life, honor, health, complexion and etc., the owner's daughter has warned me of that, and when I hook into second I knock this guy cold, and the whole plot at once becomes public's property, and on the next play I steal home with the followin' remarkable results: I win the game, the pennant, and the girl. They's a lot more to it than that, Joe, but that's the main points of the picture which is entitle "The Heart of Bonehead McGlucke."

Well, Joe, I study up that till I am eatin' it, sleepin' it, talkin' it night and day, and could go on and play it at the drop of a hat by the time I get to St. Looey. I even practiced in front of the mirror in the smokin' car when everybody was sleepin', just how I would knock the second-base villain kickin' when the time come.

I report to Pat Moran in the hotel at St. Looey, and he fails to rush up and kiss me hysterically when he sees me. First I got to prove who I am, and then he looks me up and down like I'm a flounder and he wants a pound for supper if it ain't too dear, and says the followin':

"Look here, Harmon—the high life is all over now, and you gotta tend to your knittin' from now till the world's series is over. You're no more to

me than the bat boy and you'll keep strict trainin' rules from now on. They tell me you're a bad actor—well, bad actors is my dish—get that?"

Well, Joe, I was kinda overcame by this reception, and the first thing I remember is what Rube Benton has tipped me off to about the reason the Reds was able to win the pennant. I made up my mind that I would start right in with all of my cards on the table.

"Now that you have got that off your lungs," I says in a harshly voice, "listen to me for a minute, Mister Patrick Opium Moran! I know all about what methods you used to make the Reds go crazy and win a pennant this year, so they's no use camouflagin' each other at the go in. Whilst I'm with the club I will do my best, but you wanna understand this here—you ain't gonna feed *me* no dope, not if you cried your eyes out—and there's that!"

Well, Joe, he falls back a coupla feet and looks at me like a man in astonishment.

"Patrick *Opium* Moran," he says. "*Dope?* What the —— wha' d'ye mean dope?"

"Don't try to laugh it off," I says, very stern. "I heard the whole story—everybody knows it by now. How else could you guys win a pennant if the whole club wasn't charged up with hooch every day?"

Joe, the daze look on his face goes away, and he let forth a snarl.

“Oh, a kidder, hey?” he says. “Well, you git up to your room and sleep it off. I want you at the park to-morrow mornin’ to see what you got left. You’re workin’ for *me* now, and you make one more funny crack about dope or anything else and I’ll start you off with a fine of two hundred bucks! So Mac told you I had ’em all doped, hey? Have I signed a *busher* at this stage of the game?” he winds up, walkin’ away.

Joe, the man seemed so sincere that he had me guessin’, and I made up my mind I wouldst say no more about the thing. As a matter of fact, I don’t know yet whether the Reds was all doped up or not.

Well, anyways, Moran sent me in against St. Looney for the last game of the series there, and it was a spread for me as I win under wraps 4 to 1. I brung in two of my own runs with a four-base clout whilst we had a man on third. I didn’t work no more till the Phillies come to Cincinnati, and I shut them babies out 7 to 0, and then Moran puts me on ice till the first game of the world’s series.

Joe, Jeanne come on to see that there fatally game and brung with her most of the movie bunch from the studio, which it seems was crazy to see me in action. I didn’t get much channee to mingle around with ’em, because Moran guarded me like

I was the secret of livin' forever. But a few hours before the game I managed to sneak down in the lobby of the hotel, and I seen Mister Wright, the head movie director, talkin' to Jeanne. I asked him what he was doin' there, and he just gimme a funny wink and says nothin', and before I could ask any more Moran comes growlin' along and I am whisked away to the park.

Joe, I will never forget that game as long as I live and neither will nobody else which seen it. When I walk out on the field to take my place on the mound, they was a roar went up from the crowd which must of been heard plainly in Australia. I am forced to wave my cap hithers and yon and bow to the rights and left, but with all that racket I am as cool as \$56 worth the ice. The umpire yells the historically "Play ball!" and we are off, amidst the most deathly silence.

Liebold is the first guy up and his name might just as well of been "Beer" because he only hit 2.75 against me that day. The first one was a ball and the next three sent him back to the bench, his arms sore from wildly swingin' at the air. Collins grins at me when he toes the plate and hollers: "Well, how's little Mary Pickford to-day?"

Joe, that there rattled me because how did *he* know I was in the movies and before I could get set again he has hit one by dumb luck and the boobs

I got in back of me let him get to second. I got Weaver two strikes and a ball when he asks me how I am gettin' along with Chaplin and beats out a infield hit. 'The crowd is all standin' up yellin' and there I am with two on, only one out, and no less than Jackson before me. He hollers that Douglas Fairbanks has been lookin' for me all mornin' and slams the first one out to left field, but Duncan, which seems to be the only ball player I got in back of me, spears it for the second out. Felsch prob'ly couldn't think of no crack to make and I fan him before he knows what it's all about.

I got quite a reception when I come in off the field and Moran slaps me on the back and says if he had only had me before they would of win the pennant in May.

Well, Joe, they are pitchin' Cicotte against us and he starts in by fannin' Rath and makin' Daubert pop out to right field. Heinie Groh laughs at him and tripled, whilst the crowd goes crazy and I come up next, bein' shifted to the clean-up position by Moran. Well, Joe, Schalk is catchin' for the White Sox, and he starts right in on me. He claims that Theda Bara has been hangin' around the White Sox hotel all mornin' askin' where she can find me and it must be great to be a movie star and I certainly am lucky and etc. I let the first one go by, mostly because it was a mile

over my head, but hearin' it called a strike I caught the second one on the nose and it come down in Shantung for the first bounce, scorin' Groh and placin' me on first on account of Jackson prob'ly palmin' a extry ball from his pocket and puttin' it in play whilst the one I *hit* went over the fence. How them guys get away with it is past me, because I could of swore I seen that pill soarin' away into the clouds! Well, whilst I am on first, Joe, Chick Gandil commence to tell me I oughta have more sense than to try and act in a movie whilst a importantly world's series game is goin' on and I asks him what he means, and he says, look at all the camera men on the field takin' my picture. Joe, I looked and sure enough they was forty of 'em there grindin' away like mad. All at once I remember about Mr. Wright's sayin' he was comin' out some day when I didn't know it and he was gonna take pictures of me and this must be the day, because didn't I see him in the lobby in the mornin'? Well, Gandil goes on and says it's a open secret that they was gonna take this movie I am in out there to-day and that's how all the White Sox knows it and the company which is makin' the picture has paid nearly half a million dollars for the privilege of spoilin' this game because half the White Sox players was actin' in it too, and the papers was full of it and etc.

Joe, I seen in a flash it was up to me to make good in this first picture of mine and as long as the company has it all fixed to take the thing in this game I should worry. Just then, Joe, Roush singled and I start down for second. Well, I seen Collins grinnin' at me and I figured if he is in the movin' picture too, then he is the villain second baseman which is gonna spike me and etc., so I bounced right into him and let him have a left to the jaw and out goes Mister Collins whilst the crowd immediately becomes 40,000 ravin's maniacs, most of which won't be satisfied till they have tear me limb to limb.

Joe, I am chased from the game and the police have to take me off of the field and at that a coupla bottles englished off of them and bounced on my shoulders. Moran is gnashin' his teeth like a wildly man and when he can talk at all he claims he will begin by finin' me \$500 for gettin' a bun on, and, Joe, I ain't had a drink in over a year!

Well, I found out that Gandil and the White Sox was all liars, and the camera men which was there was takin' pictures for a news weekly and didn't even know I was on earth, and Mr. Wright had no idea of takin' a movin' picture of me there, and I was crazy to hit Collins and etc.

So there you have the whole inside story, Joe, of that article in the papers which said that me and

Collins got in a fight durin' the first game of the world's series and I was canned for insubordination and etc.

Yours truly,
ED HARMON (King of the Movies).

P. S.—No doubt you seen how I pleaded with Moran to give me one more chance, and how I went in for the fourth game and shut the White Sox out, 1 to 0, in spite of the crowd makin' madly efforts to assassinate me when I first come out. Let me know what you think of my first movie—so far I hear it's rotten! ED HARMON.

CHAPTER V

THE MERCHANT OF VENUS

FIFTH INNING

In the Midst of My Drawin's Room, N. Y.

FRIEND AND ETC., JOSEPH:

Joe, I am writin' this underneath the greatest of difficulties, because we are doin' nothin' less than movin' and everything is in wildy confusion. Chairs and tables is piled hithers and yon and comin' heavyweight champions is roughin' my furniture around the rooms and out into the street and I gotta keep a eye on 'em so's they won't bust nothin' outside of the usually \$200 worth the dishes and the like. Jeanne and my baby has already gone forth to my new home, but I was left flat here with the instructions to come up with the motor lorries (English slang for truck, Joe) which is gonna try and move us so's I can see that nothin' in the line of house furnishin's gets lost, strayed or stole on the ways, unless it's *me* and in that case it don't make no difference. It's easily enough to replace a husband, Joe, but Looey the 14 antics like our parlor set is as rare as a hen with

a toothache and must be watched like a young infant baby.

I will tell you how it come to the pass that I am movin' Joe, from my magnificently apartment up on Riverside's Drive where Grant's Tomb and all the well-to-do millionaires lives although of lately it ain't as exclusively as form'ly, because a family with the unromantical name of Smith, which got their jack outa the sausages and choice bolognas etc., profession, is takin' the very apartment I am leavin' behind. The reason I am movin' is the same as the reason I can afford to do it and that's no less than Jeanne, the luckiest wife in the world, bein' mine!

After the world's series is all wound up and I have covered myself up with glory, I come back to New York with Jeanne to become a second Geraldine Fairbanks in the movies. Undoubtedly, you remember I told you we had signed a lease with a huge and famously company which guarantees us almost nearly as much salary as Colombus wouldst get now if he could come to life and go to work somewheres as a judge of real estate. The lease claims we must make at least three pictures a year and no questions asked and they are good, square guys, Joe, even if somewhat shrewdly and let 'em try and bust my contract and they will see more lawyers five minutes later than

the average judge sees in a lifetime—and there's *that!*

Well, Joe, one of the first things that greets my eyes when we get back to my flat is a official communique from the landlord sayin' he wants to see me at my earliest convenience or in the other words, at once. Of course, they is only one thing for me to think regardin' this subject and that is that the landlord is filled with a cravin' to congratulate me for my wonderfully showin' in the world's series and prob'ly he no doubt wants me to accept the flat free for the next year and I can pick my own hall boys and etc. I was kinda tired after the trip, Joe, and wouldst rather of gone to bed, but a man like me bein' in the public's eye from mornin' to night is under certain obligations to one and all, so I went down to the basement where the landlord has a office without no more further ado.

I am forced to say, Joe, that this guy didn't leap up off his chair and try to kiss me or nothin' like that. Instead, he merely flicks a coldly nod in my direction and says:

"I've been expecting to see you for the last week, Mister Harmon. Have you been out of town?"

Joe, can you imagine that? *Have I been outa town*—after what *I* done in the world's series! I bet that guy would ask Pershing if he ever took a ocean trip!

I can get as sarcastical as the next one if necessary, so I give him right back his coldly nod and says:

“What d’ye mean have I been outa town? I been outa town for over a month! Don’t you ever read the papers?”

“Not the police court news!” he says. “You should have engaged a good lawyer. What was the trouble?”

Joe, I controlled myself with the greatest of difficulty. Imagine this here ig’rant fathead, which ain’t got nothin’ but nine apartment houses on Riverside’s Drive and two on Second Avenue, intimidatin’ that *I* had been in jail!

“Are you tryin’ to kid me?” I hollers, in a terrible rage. “Why you old boob, I just come back from bein’ the bright, shinin’ star of the world’s series, which you prob’ly don’t even know what that is, hey?”

“World’s series of *what?*” he sneers.

“*Parcheesi*, you idiotical hick!” I yells, furiously with anger. “If I knowed as little as *you* do about what’s this and what’s that, I’d run for Congress and prob’ly get elected. I bet they could make twelve sets of dice at the very least outa your head! C’mon—what d’ye wanna see me about?”

Joe, he commence to tappin’ on his desk with a lead’s pencil, the while pullin’ idly at his whiskers.

"I wanted to see you," he says, "to say that the chances are you are going out of town *again* very shortly, unless—unless you are prepared to stand a little more on your apartment."

"I could stand a little more *steam* without no trouble," I says, givin' sneer for sneer. "Accordin' to my maid, which has inhabited the joint since I been away, she has been puttin' the food on top of the radiators at nights to keep it from spoilin'!"

"You're the only tenant in this house that's complained about the heat," he says.

"The rest of 'em prob'ly ain't had no heat to complain about!" I comes back, with a snappily air.

"Do you think that's funny?" he snarls.

"I'll leave it to you," I says. "I've paid two bucks to hear worse, many's the time!"

"That will do!" he grunts, waggin' the lead's pencil at me. "I sent for you to tell you that you were notified thirty days ago that at the expiration of your present lease, your rent would be increased to \$250 a month. I'm willing to make it \$230, if you pay the first year's rent in advance. That's the best I can do!"

"I can't see into it," I says. "What's the *worst* you can do?"

"Dispossess you!" he bawls. "And that's just what will happen if you don't make up your mind

in twenty-four hours. I had a party looking at your apartment only yesterday, that was willing to pay \$300 a month for it!"

"Stop it!" I says. "You prob'ly showed 'em Grant's Tomb by mistake." I walked over and shook my fist under his beak. "Is this the way you treat a guy which went over the top to fight for you?" I says.

"At the time you were going over the top," he sneers, "you weren't fighting for *me*, you were fighting for *you*! You hear my proposition—take it or leave it!"

With that, Joe, he picks up the 'phone and pays no further attention to me than if I was China and he was the League of Nations.

Well, Joe, my first idea was to bust him in the nose and be done with it, but this guy wouldst only add it to my telephone bill in the shape of a long distance call or the like, so I held myself checked and after givin' some slightly vent to my passions by flingin' him a horribly look, I went back upstairs to break the tough news to Jeanne.

Joe, it was like goin' from the fryin's pan into the fire, because no more has the maid permit me to enter my flat when Jeanne commences bawlin' me out to the right and left. Although I been off of the stuff for so long that for all I know a high-ball is a dance pulled off on the top of Washington's

Monument, she won't have it no other way but that I have drop in at the corner to see my old friends which she claims is *canaille* and has forced me to pass up. I says I am not guilty and anyways, if I *had* gone in the corner what good is it now when we have all been took prisoner by prohibition and a glass of crack ice is nothin' but a mockery. She claims they is still 2.75 beer and I says yes, but that means two bottles for seventy-five cents and they is a worse kick in skim milk than they is in that.

"What then has kept you so long from the home?" she says, with a pout which would make them magazine cover dames take ether.

"Tryin' to keep the home so long," I says. "Our jovially landlord is attemptin' to take the apartment away from us. You wanna cancel all games you got scheduled for to-day, we gotta go out and dig up another robber and try to rent a flat from him—otherwise, this guy will hurl us bodily into the street!"

What does Jeanne do, Joe, but jump up and clap her hands, the while grinnin' from one ear to another.

"*Viola!*" she says. "But that is *charmant!*"

I like to fell into the baby's crib, a thing I have always try to avoid.

"*Charmant?*" I hollers. "What is they *char-*

mant about bein' gave the bum's rush, when think of the reputation I have got to uphold here and there! D'ye realize how tough it is to find a apartment in this New York burg now, hey? They has been no buildin' since the war and still and all fresh, new people has been pourin' in by the millions every minute. The town's so overcrowded now that foundations for apartment houses is bein' laid off Sandy's Hook and Fire Island! The chances are we will be under canvass in Central's Park before the week is out and——"

"Edouard!" butts in Jeanne, very sudden and with the first traces of wifely anger commencin' to show in them baby's blue eyes of hers. "How often have I tell you to not holler at Jeanne like you do those pinochle *cochon* friends of yours I have exile from here? Now you will at once make apologize, *oui?*"

"*Oui* is right!" I says, tryin' to kiss the approachin' battle away and missin' it from here to Russia. "I'm sorry and etc., but——"

Tryin' to interrupt your wife whilst she is talkin', Joe, is the same as tryin' to halt Niagara Falls with "Who goes there?"

"If you will then be quiet," she butts in. "I will explain all. I am happy we must to leave here, because now Jeanne can have her own *château* somewhere out in those beautiful country and live

like a lady and not like one sardine in those box you call flats! *Tiens*—Jeanne is not use to live this way! When you take me away from my beautiful France and my *charmant maison de la Verne*, I at least have plenty of the sweet, fresh air and——”

“*I’ll* say you was havin’ plenty of fresh air when I took you away from the mason de Verne, all right!” I says. “On account of the roof havin’ just been blowed of by a coupla whizz bangs!”

“*Qu’importe !*” she says, shruggin’ them shoulders of hers which is the same as my head, bein’ ivory. “That was *le guerre*. But before that—ah!—it was *magnifique !* I have never been content to live the way I have since I come to the *Etats Unis*, but I say nothing because you were not a rich man, *mon Edouard*. But now we have *beaucoup* francs and you are no longer those ball player. Jeanne will have you home all the time and then there is little Weelson. It is not good that he should live by those dangerous subway, *n’est ce pas ?*”

“He don’t have to play in the subway, does he?” I growls.

She lets that one pass.

“We will have the array of servants,” she goes on, “the motors, one special nurse for Weelson, your valet, *femmes du chambre*—in short, *ma cherie*, we shall in truth have the castle and Jeanne

shall be your chatelaine! What on the Heavens and earth more than that could you desire?"

"The money to pay for it—that's all!" I says. "Now listen—you might as well forget about that hashish eater's dream of yours, Jeanne, because my name is Harmon and not Rockefeller. Livin' the way you have just mentioned wouldn't get *me* sore either, but I couldn't even buy a photograph of the layout you have just reeled off—and there's *that*! In fact we are livin' too expensive as it is and I was figurin' on cannin' the car and the chauffeur and then——"

"For weeks I have had talk and letters with Monsieur Charles Prunty and now all is settled," she goes on, like she ain't even heard a *comma* of what I just said. "It is away up on the Hudson River and——"

"Hey—wait!" I hollers. "Who the—who's Charles Prunty and what's 'way up on the Hudson—Albany?"

"*Non, non, non!*" she says. "Our glorious and *magnifique château de luxe*! Twenty rooms, seven baths, garage, stables—well, you shall then see for yourself, *mon Edouard*. And the amount? Poof—it is nothing! But thirty-five thousand dollars. We will hurry up there now and you shall give Monsieur Charles Prunty your check for half and Jeanne will herself pay the other half!" She

jumps up all excited, "Marie!" she hollers at the maid. "Have me on the telephone Greeley 88694, *dépêcher!*"

Well, Joe, it was now my time to either be a man or a mouse with my charmin' wife runnin' amucks on me like this, like I was merely one of the hired help instead of the lord and master of the domains of my flat. I got up and stood between Jeanne and the 'phone and drewed myself up coldly, featurin' more dignity than they is in the U. S. Supreme Court when they got a important oil case before 'em.

"One moment, Mrs. Harmon!" I says, usin' a name I seldom call Jeanne even when at the height of rage. "One moment. This here has gone far enough! You seem to have forgot that I am your husband. In France a husband may be nothin', but on Riverside's Drive a husband is practically a East Indiana Rajah in his home and the most merely flicker of his eyelash is law! I have told you I can't afford no country's home and that winds it—get me? I am goin' down now and tell our genially landlord I will pay the raise he asks and if you bring this Monsieur Charles Prunty guy down here I'll say he'll do a piece of runnin' three seconds after he pushes the door bell! We're gonna live right here until *I* think we oughta move. *I'm* boss here and I got no intention of abdicatin' in your favor for some time to come.

For the next year, at the least, your address will be exactly the same as it is now—and there's *that!*"

Leavin' her standin' there dumfounded to within' one half inch of her life, Joe, I grabbed hold of my hat and paced from the room amidst a silence which would make a gnat's footstep sound like a TNT party.

They's nothin' like showin' your wife who's who and be done with it, hey? I guess I'm a sucker to give this here yegg which poses as a landlord by day, \$230 a month for parkin' space for my little family, but at the least I got the satisfaction of not givin' in to my wife and have not been humiliated or the like, hey Joe?

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (Reignin' Monarch of
his Own Home, at the least!)

Harmony Hall, alongside of Hudson's River, N. Y.

Mon Ami JOE:

Undoubtlessly you will be filled with surprise and etc. when you lamp the address I have put at the top of this letter and you will no doubt prob'ly wonder is Harmony Hall a jail, a hospital, a theatre or even maybe a lunatical asylum, hey? Well, Joe, I will ease the strain on your head by tellin' you that Harmony Hall is none of them things, but instead is the name of my country's

estate on the beautifully Hudson, opposite the prominently known Palisades and the like. Joe, it is a wonderfully country up here and reminds me a great deal of some of the places we passed through in France, except that it ain't rainin'. Right next to *my* palace is the astoundin' castle of Stanley J. Friegenheim, the well fixed millionaire and by lookin' out my attic window I can see the old bird walkin' in his garden. Not that it's a especially treat to me to look at a guy which can write a check for a million fish and *get* it, when I have shook hands with a coupla kings, not to mention queens, jacks and etc., whilst in Europe on government business last year. Why, Joe, as far as that goes, the president of France even *kissed* me when he pinned the second *Croix de Guerre* on me, so what's lookin' at a merely millionaire to *me*, hey?

However, I will try and not be stuck up with this Friegenheim guy and if he comes over to borreh my lawn's mower and etc. I will let him have it for a reasonably deposit and maybe me and him can break up the long winter nights which is comin' with pinochle, rummy and etc.

No doubt you are wonderin' how it come to the pass that I am livin' in the country, when me and New York life meant so much to each other for years. Well, Joe, it's very simply. I had all the war I could take over in Europe and I would be a

simp to start one in my own home after what happened to the kaiser, which had much more room to work in. Jeanne wanted to buy this here steal on Buckin'ham Palace we are livin' in now and I swore that no matter what come to the pass I wouldst not leave the city. The result is that the next day we took this place up Hudson's River which I have named Harmony Hall in honor of Gen. Pershing, as the Gen's name is too long to go over the main's entrance.

I hated to give in, Joe, after once puttin' my feet down on it, but women is practically runnin' this country to-day what with votin' to the rights and lefts and etc. and they is no use to try and boss 'em, because it will get you nowheres. As far as that goes, they are liable to run the U. S. as well as us strongly men has and with the high cost of a livin' to-day, prohibition, guys goin' on strikes and runnin' off race riots, the women can't do no worse a job than we done! The thing you have got to recognize now, Joe, is the freedom of the shes, hey?

Well, Joe, before I move again I will purchase a divorce if necessary, because them days of packin' and etc. is somethin' I will never forget! Whatever important and expensively things we didn't lose, we broke and whatever things we didn't do either with, the movin' men did both. They charged me \$15 the hour for the privilege of

wreckin' my furniture and accordin' to the hours they claimed they used up, they had paralytic snails drawin' the vans all the ways. Joe, they is one other thing connected with movin' and that is—if you got any pride you will lose it with lightnin' like speed the minute the movin' men enters the house. A movin' man thinks *everybody's* furniture is rotten, no matter how expensively it may be and they will sneer at a \$600 dinin' room table like it was the roof of the dog house and by the time they get through throwin' sarcastical glances at your stuff you feel like a bum and wonder if it's worth while movin' it at all and why not throw the junk down the dum waiter shaft and be done with it!

Well, Joe, I have got to make this one short and sweetly, on account of Jeanne havin' as usually give out press tickets for a lotta people to come up to our house to-night, only this time the excuse is called a "house warmin'." I have got to shave and get fixed up like a honorary pall bearer except with more white shirt showin', although you might think the proper costume for a house warmin' wouldst be a fireman's suit, hey?

Anyways, Joe, I trust I don't get in no jam as of old.

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (Feudal Lord
of Harmony Hall).

*Harmony Hall (With the First
Part Gettin' Weak, Joe!)*

Carissima Jose and the like:

Well, Joe, I am in a jam as of old and I am convinced now that they is more to married life than they is to any of the other national games of America. I always make it the point to try and please one and all, which same is about as easy as it wouldst be for a guy with chronic St. Vitus dance to try and walk the tight rope over Hades. In the future, I am gonna devote my activities to pleasin' myself and that's all!

Joe, although I am still a native of this here castle of mine, I am at present livin' like a single bachelor, because Jeanne has removed herself and my baby and our mutual maid to another part of the house and I am about like Napoleon was whilst the well known army man was on St. Helen's Island. I got the same amount of friends as the Crown's Prince of what used to be Germany and likewise and to wit, my future is just as bright!

How did all this come to the pass, you will say and I will answer that I am the innocently victim of my own huge heartedness. Like Nero, I tried to be a good guy and got the worst of it and that's *that!*

Them which is really responsible for the fact that I am in wrong is no less than Jeanne and a

sceneryaro writer by the name of Wm. Shakespeare. I predict a bright future for this kid which wrote a piece called "The Merchant of Venus" and whilst the idea is old stuff, it ain't bad for a unknown at that. But the point is between this Shakespeare guy and my charmin' and beautifully wife, I have been put in solitary confinement in my own home and they can share the blame, fifty fifty.

A woman changes her mind so often, Joe, that she would make one of them sha melons with the trick colored backs quit like a dog. Remember I told you we was gonna tear off a house warmin'? Well, naturally enough I figured on wearin' the old chairman of the entertainment committee suit, but at the last minute what does Jeanne do but make up her mind she's gonna give a costume's ball. Joe, a costume's ball is where not satisfied with *makin'* a fool out of yourself, you dress the part also and Jeanne won't have it no other way but that I'm gonna be a musket's ear of the time of Looey the 14. I gotta go downtown and hire a set of scenery which if you ever flashed me in it, Joe, you wouldst be the first one to take offense. What they is of it is red velvet and in lew of pants I got tights and around my manly neck is a millstone made outa starch lace all ruffled up and etc. Joe, they is also lace ruffles on my cuffs and I got a sword which might alarm a frog, but wouldst never

harm him. The whole effect is supposed to represent this Looey the 14 musket's ear, but when I flash myself in the lookin's glass I am satisfied I look a great deal more like Sweet Spirits of Niter!

Well, Joe, Jeanne is disguised as Dinah, the Goddess of the chased, and if this Dinah ever went around dressed as scarcely as that, I can understand the Board of Censors pullin' off a mutiny, though when I give Jeanne a argument she claims she copied her costume from one of this Goddess Dinah's favorite snap shots. The only Goddess I ever met personally, Joe, was the Goddess of Liberty, but after flashin' Jeanne in her costume which after all was more modestly than I have seen when dragged to the grand's opera and etc. I am satisfied that she is the only original Goddess and the rest of them is ringers. If I was one of them poetically guys I might be able to describe what Jeanne looked like when she stepped to the door of my room before goin' down to make out she was glad to see my guests, but not bein' one I can only say they is only one other guy in the world which has any idea of how she looked to me and his name is Mark's Anthony!

Well, Joe, I fin'ly got all fixed up in this here musket's ear costume and whilst I know I look insipid and silly, I try to carry it off with a boldly air and go downstairs to greet our guests like I been

used to this all my life and etc. The guests is what you might call a mixed crowd, Joe, bein' made up of Big League society dames and their boy friends with a sprinklin' of movie stars for dessert. Everybody is forced to wear a mask accordin' to the rules so's that nobody will know positively who the other guy is until the bewitchin' hours of midnight, when each and all snatches off their masks amidst a chorus of delightful "Ah's!"

In about a hour a slew of guests has arrived and I never seen such a scene since the night I had the typhoid's fever and got delerious. Everybody is wearin' a different costume from the other, Joe, and they is ballot girls, devils, women sheep herders, clowns of all the sexes, fairy queens, mermaids, vampires, innocently milkmaids, etc. etc. and even etc.

Well, we mill around hithers and yon, Joe, and I could of swear I had the experience of bein' flirted with several times, but bein' a full fledge married man I have put all that behind me and content myself with merely lettin' forth pleasantly smiles to one and all. Some of them high society dames which was dressed to thrill certainly took a terrible chance of catchin' cold and not in the head either, but as long as their costumes proved not to embarrass *them* why should *I* raise a reprov'in' eyebrow, hey, Joe?

I moved about here and there, Joe, playin' no favorites and fin'ly I wind up in a corner of the ball's room where a guy dressed up as a lizard is readin' to Jeanne and a lotta other dames the sceneryaro of Jeanne's last picture which she is to appear in by herself, before we face the camera together. It is called "The Merchant of Venus," Joe, like I told you before and whilst I only caught a odd snatch of it here and there, the plot is some-thin' like this.

It seems they was a young guy over in the old country by the name of Antonio, which fell for a swell lookin' dame which answered to the name of Portia, havin' met her whilst she was on her way to the local delicatessen mill to get a pound of *fleish* (Jewish for meat, Joe,) for her old man, which rejoices in the name of Shylock. Well, on account of religious differences and the like, Shylock refused to allow the happy young folks to get wed and bawled out his charmin' daughter to a fare-thee-well for bringin' back Antonio instead of the pound of *fleish*. Well, Joe, Portia bein' a clever kid, called her boy friend to one side and whispers in his ear and Antonio, which had *beaucoup* pennies, beats it to the only delicatessen in town and buys it out from the dumfounded proprietor, thereby and to wit cornerin' all the *fleish* in the burg. Old Shylock, which by this time is on the

brinks of starvation, goes yellin' and wailin' all over the place for his pound of *fleish* and fin'ly Portia says if she can wed this Antonio guy she will see that her father is well fed in peace and plenty forever after. Shylock, though chokin' with the rage, hadda give in and there's *that* !

Well, you can see they ain't much to it outside of the love interest, Joe, but Jeanne is gonna be Portia and she seemed to like it very much and whilst if my baby couldn't write a better novel than that I would trade him for a scarf pin, I suppose it's O. K.

In my wanderin's here and there about my castle, I see that joy is at its height and the boys and girls is all paired off, jazzin' around and etc. They ain't no question but what it's all gonna cost me a handsome penny, but we only live once or twice and I would rather die happy than rich—still and all, hurlin' away dough like this is nothin' short of criminal. The male delegates to this party is nearly all hangin' around Jeanne like she was the only one in the world which knowed a place where soft drinks was forbidden, but I have got over bein' jealous long ago. Only they is at least three guys there, Joe, which if they had of looked at Jeanne once more like they was when I come in, they would of immediately got acquainted with the nearest doctor to where we live!

Well, over in a corner all alone is a rather stoutly dame which at first glance looks like the Tower of Jewels they had on Fifth Avenue for the soldiers. She will never again glimpse her forty-fifth birthday, but she has got it on the other girls in the matter of chins havin' at the least three to their one. Also she is featurin' more diamonds than Tiffany ever seen on the best day he had and she is dressed to represent Queen Elizabeth, which if her make-up is truthful, I bet said Queen never got elected for no second term. But what's worryin' me, Joe, is that she is all alone like a wall's flower, whereas and to wit all the other girls has got from six to a dozen guys hangin' around 'em. Now, Joe, when I give a blowout I want *everybody* to be happy and go away singin' my praises for bein' a good guy and the like and anyways, I feel full of love and romance after hearin' this "Merchant of Venus" thing. So I made up my mind I wouldst see that this dame got a partner if I hadda break a leg.

I wish now, Joe, I had broke the leg!

Charlotte Russeau, the famously vampire, happens to pass me at that minute and says how's tricks and I says I wouldst like a short, brief chat with her. Havin' been granted the audience, I asks her who is the stoutly and inclined to be elderly dame which is sittin' all by herself in the

midst of the gaiety and lettin' forth what is known as smirks at the young men, without none of 'em givin' her a tumble.

"Why," says Charlotte. "That's Mrs. Hedges-Plympton, the society leader and the dame which is playin' fairy godmother to your wife in gettin' her across with the class of this burg. She's a silly old fool and makes me sick, personally, but she's got \$1.25 for every dark complected gent in India and won't even curl a eyebrow at anybody which ain't descended from deckhands on the *Mayflower*, outside of your wife. She's been pointed out to me once and introduced to me once and was as friendly both times. They tell me that ordinarily she's as frosty as Cape Nome, but she seems to have let down a bit to-night. I know she looks on us artists as some queer kinda fish and that's what kidnaps my goat! Warren Kendall, the Super-Players star, asked her to dance, outa pity and she turned him down so cold the poor boy is sufferin' from chilblains. She won't mix with nobody but her own kind and she's only here as a favor to your wife. Look at her givin' us all the once over through that trick glass of hers. I bet she's sayin', 'My, what horrid creatures!' Well, they's no use of *me* gettin' sore at the old iceberg—all *I* gotta do is look in a pier glass and then I can feel sorry for *her*! Wanna dance?"

"No thanks!" I says, with the greatest of politeness. "I'm on the wagon. Thanks for the dope and I trust you are havin' a good time."

"Soon as it gets the other way, I'll leave!" she says, and blows.

Well, Joe, bein' still all fill up with that "Merchant of Venus" thing I can't help feelin' sorry for the gently old lady and I says to myself it is up to me to dig her up a partner of her own kind so's she can enjoy herself and they must be at the least one other blue blood there, because Jeanne has got the habit of gettin' everything in sets. So I wander here and I wander there on my romantical quest and fin'ly I wander outside the house and onto the lawn, feelin' a great deal like a modern Cupid, except of course I have not got a Cupid's uneyform on.

Well, Joe, they is a tall, handsome and distinguished lookin' guy out there and his costume consists of a lotta gold lace and buttons here and there and my guess is that he's takin' off a Turkish admiral or the like. He ain't got no mask on, prob'ly havin' took it off to get the air and he makes a politely bow when he sees me which I give back, at the same time gettin' in the information that I am no less than Ed. Harmon. Joe, he immediately presented me with another bow and says that's very good and he's got a accent like a

English Duke and in spite of his masquerades costume you can see he is class all over. I then says is he havin' a nice time and he says he is and I made the bold to inquire at this point why he ain't inside with the rest of the merry's makers. Well, that seemed to kinda fluster him a bit and he commences to stall and I see in a minute he's one of them bashful birds which ain't at the top of their game when in a crowd and he has undoubtedly stole outside for a little relief. So to put him at his ease, I told him all about the "Merchant of Venus" and he laughed heartily at it and claims it's "Rippin'." Then I told him a coupla more stories like the one about it seems they was a Irishman which just come over and—well, anyways, Joe, I worked fast and kept him on the verge of the hystericals for upwards of half a hour.

Well, Joe, then it struck me that here was a chance for me to do a good deed, especially as I am fill of that romantical Shakespeare kid's stuff, because here is a guy outside all alone and inside is a dame the same way and what could be sweeter than for me to bring them together? I could tell right away from this guy's conversation that he was at the least as blue blood as Mrs Hedges-Plympton if not more so and the chances are they wouldst welcome each other with open arms.

So I grabbed him gently by the arms, Joe, and

keepin' the conversation at fever's heat, I steered him over to the door. He gimme a trifle resistance and says Really, you know, he cawn't go inside just yet and then I remember he ain't got no mask on, so I take off mine and fasten it around his face before he can stop me. Then I put a silk handkerchief over my own face, Joe, so's not to break the rules of Jeanne's costume ball. He keeps pullin' back and sayin' he don't care to go in, but I shove him gently and firmly along until we get right in front of Mrs. Hedges-Plympton, which is still stoutly, fulla diamonds and alone. On the way over I have whispered to him what's his name and he says it's Sawnders so whilst the prominently society leader is examin'in' me carefully with her glasses which she wears on the end of a stick, I says:

"Mrs. Hedges-Plympton, shake hands with Mister Sawnders of here and undoubtlessly England, from his talk. I want you two to be little pals together and I feel you can't miss fallin' for each other!"

With that, I blowed, Joe, and I think I carried the rather tryin' situation, fully as well as Reggie Rockerbilt could of did it and I never been in society before in my life, outside of the Legal Aid Society when I worked for a butcher as a child, which fired me without payin' off.

Well, Joe, from then on everything went merrily and I felt so good over what I had did that I tripped the lightly fantastic with a coupla dames and etc., and when I sneaked a look at Mister Sawnders and Mrs. Hedges-Plympton I seen them dancin' likewise and although this swell lookin' guy looked a trifle nervously to the nude eye, he certainly seemed to be gettin' over with the high society leader from the way she was leanin' on his arm and smilin' up at him. He certainly was a handsome guy, they's no two ways about it and I heard some guy say that whoever he was, his make-up was deucedly clever.

Fin'ly along comes twelve o'clock and the cater's dinner is all set and the guests stops dancin' and separates in pairs around the ball's room. Jeanne is by my side and why not and she whispers to me to switch off the lights the minute the clock strikes twelve. Everybody is supposed to take off their masks whilst in utter darkness and then on goes the lights and the girls can see who is the boobs which has been treadin' on their feet all night on the pretense of dancin'.

Well, Joe, I got the lights out all O. K. and they is a excitedly buzz of conversation with happy laughter and etc. and then Jeanne tells me to throw 'em on again. When I done that and whilst everybody is blinkin' and kiddin' each other, I seen that

Mister Sawnders still has his mask on and not only that he's tryin' to make a break for the exit nearest him. The boys and girls is all laughin' and Mrs. Hedges-Plympton giggles and commences to act the same as a young kitten and she hangs onto his arm.

"You naughty boy!" she says. "You shawnt go unrevealed!" and with that she reaches up and tears off his mask.

Sweet Cookie!

Joe, Jeanne give one look at the handsome stranger and let forth a shriek and a coupla guys near me busts out laughin' and says. "This is rich!" and a dame from the mansion next to us gasps. "*Why—that's my butler!*"

Mister Sawnders breaks away and vanishes through the door, Joe, and Mrs. Hedges-Plympton, after one dumfounded look all around, picks out the best lookin' guy near her and faints in his arms, diamonds, three chins and all!

Well, Joe, everything is in wildly confusion and I figured after one look from Jeanne that they had all the help they needed for first aid and etc., so I took it on the run myself. The last I seen, the movin' picture gang was laughin' themselves sick and Jeanne was tryin' to bring Mrs. Hedges-Plympton back to life with all the maids in the place as assistants and the like.

I come in at six the next mornin', Joe, wore out and on the brinks of exhaustion after wanderin' around in the woods all night dressed like this musket's ear of the time of Looey the 14. Jeanne was waitin' up for me and let us draw the veil over what took place immediately on the heels of my entrance. Never's the less, I found out the sensational information that Jeanne had borreyed this Sawnders guy which was a butler, all right, from the dame which lives next door so's to give her costume's ball the fin'lly touch of class. I also hear that I have runed Jeanne forever and a day with Mrs. Hedges-Plympton which left terrible insulted and etc. on account of bein' worth hogshead of lucre and bein' as high in society as Piker's Peak and then bein' paired off with a humbly butler.

As I say, Joe, Jeanne claimed I did it on purpose and is now livin' apart from me, though in the same house of which I am a inmate. It wasn't my fault at all and if I hadn't been all romanced up after hearin' that "Merchant of Venus" thing, I would never of tried to dig up a partner for Mrs. Hedges-Plympton and all would of been well.

How did *I* know this guy was a butler, Joe, when everybody around the place was disguised as *somethin'*, hey?

Anyways, Joe, this Sawnders guy was certainly class. You oughta of heard him say, "Rahly, I cawn't!"

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (The Victim of Cruelly
Circumstances and etc).

CHAPTER VI

THE FREEDOM OF THE SHES

SIXTH INNING

*Harmony Hall (Nestlin' along the
banks of Hudson's River) N. Y.*

Ma Cherie JOE:

Well, I have got a hour to assassinate in some ways or the other so I says to Jeanne, well I guess I will write a letter to Joe, hey? and she wiggles her shoulders and says "*Mais comment donc!*" which is short for "O. K." in French, Joe, so here I am toyin' with the identical implements which put Shakespeare over, or in the other word's pen. ink and paper.

I have just come from havin' no less than my English lesson, Joe, and out of a possible 100 points I hit .45 which ain't bad for the first time up, hey? I am now quite a authority on parsin' verbs and etc. and I can tell a noun ten miles away by the scent alone if need be. Also, I am as intimately acquainted with the construction of sentences as any yegg which ever found himself face to face with a jury. Joe, I am takin' this grammar and etc.

internally in order to please my *charmant* wife, Jeanne, which claims I speak the native's tongue like I had picked it up on the outskirts of Norway or the like. I am forced to go through a lotta novels every day by the name of "McGill's Third Reader" and etc. and copy off a lotta ridiculously stuff like, "I love little pussy its coat is so warm and if I don't bite her he'll do me no harm!" Can you imagine a grown up adult like me wilin' away time on that kinda delerious tremens? Then they is other bound volumes which I gotta wade through and which says on page 1, "Find the verb in the following sentence, ie, 'A Red Turnip'."

Well, it's all in the lifetime, Joe, and if it gives Jeanne any innocent pleasure to have me do this I might as well go through with it and by the time I get released from this here night's school I am a habitue of I will no doubt be able to speak the King's English to the Queen's taste and in that case I can prob'ly get a job at clerical work on the payroll of some guy which thinks adverbs is the name of a religion.

No doubt you will be wonderin' how I come out with Jeanne after that battle I got into with her on account of me bringin' the humbly butler to her costume's ball and pairin' him off with Mrs. Hedges-Plympton, the high society leader, like I told you in my last letter. Well, I come out

better than Germany did, anyways, Joe, on account of Jeanne bein' French and the French bein' a nation of business people, besides bein' romantic. Us doughboys found that part of it out when we went over there to save 'em from the terrible Hun because when it come to chargin', Joe, they was nobody could beat the French whether it was over the top or over the counter!

But that's neither here and there, the idea is that Jeanne was forced to make up with me on account of us goin' to be heroes in the movin' pictures like I have repeatedly told you. As we are under a lease to a company for five years and they is *beaucoup* pennies at the stake, a man's wife would be silly to present him with the cold's shoulder when we gotta work together in order to get this jack. In a union they is strikes, as the guy says, hey, Joe?

So now all is peace and quiet in the inside of Harmony Hall, except maybe when my baby, which same is gettin' teeth faster than he'll ever get dollars, wails aloud into the night's air and then I have to get up from my downy's bed and wander hithers and yon around the castle with him, the while hummin' sweet lull and buys like, "Go to sleep you little boob, we are livin' in the midst of millionaires and etc. now and can't punish the neighbors like when we dwelled in a flat!"

Don't think that this here armistice was brung about with the ease of fallin' off the log, Joe, because it was far be it from such. I put in a week at solitary's confinement in our mutual home without seein' nobody but grocery boys and etc. and you gotta hand it to them guys at that, Joe, because they deliver the goods, even if they gotta go around to the servant's entrance to do the same. Well, after seven days without even a merely glimpse at the girl I have gave my heart and hand to, Joe, or the magnificent young infant baby which has blessed my union, this here business of bein' treated like I had small's pox or was accused of bein' the Crown's Prince from Germany, begin to get on my nerves. I sent Jeanne a cellar full of notes by the via of her maid at arms, Marie, any one of which would of melt the heart of a loan shark and I am not even presented with the courtesy of a sarcastical answer. Accordin' to the reports which reaches me, Jeanne has suddenly became the same as a guy comin' to bat for the Athletics—she is always out!

Well, Joe, you know they is nobody on the earth can make the fool outa me and get away with it, as a gross of people has found out, so after thinkin' over the thing carefully and in cold blood, I come to the conclusions that I had made a three-base error when I turned over my future happiness to

Jeanne. Although my heart was broke in half a dozen places as the result of the way she had turned on the hand that fed her, you might say, I decided to show her once and for all I was not the one to be trifled with, so with that I made up my mind to go down town and get a divorce and be done with it!

On the way out, Joe, I left a little sadly note on the table in the parlor right in front of the pier glass, because Jeanne always stands there and takes a long, lingerin' look at herself when goin' out or the contrary and I knowed she would see it. 'This here's what I wrote and I leave it to *your* judgement if it wouldn't melt the heart of a wild beast:

DEAR MRS. HARMON:

Since findin' you around this house has became the same as tracin' a needle in the haystack, I have decided that your love for me has joined the aviation corps. Therefore and to wit, I am this day goin' to a lawyer and get my unconditional release from the bounds of wedlock, or in the other words, a divorce. As soon as I get the same, will advise you. You have broke my heart and runed me and it seems them society pals of yours is more important than your legally husband which has wore his head to the bone tryin' to think out new and novel ways to please you. I gave up baseball on your account and you would never of been a movie star was it not for bein' my wife as you will see by the advertisin' that my name's in bigger letters than yours. I am sick and tired of bein' turned into a parlor pet and a jazz hound. They will be no more of them parties gave in my house and you can present my dress suit to the Knights from Columbus or to

Abie Lowenstein, which is secretary of the downtown Young Men's Christian Association and no doubt they can use it for some of the worthy poor. Whilst you are readin' this, I will be gettin' a divorce and if you will call me at Greeley 54763 I will be glad to get one for you whilst I am at it.

Your comin' ex-husband,

ED. HARMON (I was good enough when
you met me in France, hey?)

P. S.—I have throwed my English grammar into the ash can and hereafter I will talk like I please!

Well, Joe, after havin' dashed that off and left it where it would catch Jeanne's beautifully eyes, I copied off the names of a dozen choice lawyers from the 'phone book and went outside where the car is standin' with the chauffeur sittin' back at his ease readin' a paper, like he was the proprietor of the bus instead of me. Joe, he glances at me like he had never seen me before in his life and what of it.

"Drive me into New York!" I says. "C'mon now, make it snappy!"

"Very sorry, sir," he says, as cold as Jan. 10 in Alaska, "but my orders is to wait here 'til five o'clock!"

Joe, with that he let forth what is knowed as a yawn and turnin' over a page of the paper, he goes on readin' society tidbits and the etc. For all the attention he showered on *me*, I could of been in let us say Russia, for the example. Here I am

payin' this traffic cops' delight forty berries the week, Joe, and he is better dressed than I am and pullin' the airs of a freshly made second lieutenant on me. Joe, since I am learnin' to be a gentleman I know just the proper air of quiet dignity to use with a unruly servant, so I leaped on the runnin' board and yelled into his ear.

"You dizzy simp, you'll be sorrier than a formerly bartender in a minute if you don't step on that gas and roll me away from here! I'm the baby that pays you off every week and I'm likewise governor-general of this house and all the inmates. Who give you them orders to wait, hey?"

Joe, he never even flicked the eyebrow.

"The boss," he says. "Mrs. Harmon, sir!"

Can you imagine that, Joe? The *boss*! You'd think I was a merely hired man or the like around my magnificent country's estate, whereas on the other hand I am really the lord and master. Well, I had to step away from the car before my feelin's got the best of me, because I was afraid I would slam this bird in the nose just to set the example to the other menials which had gone over to the enemy, but in the nick of time I remembered that a gentleman never clouts no servant in public, but instead lets it go with givin' the low fellow a sound and dignified reprimand. So I called this guy a

few names which he will never have printed on his visitin' card and then I paced over to the house again, determined to get a audience with Jeanne and have the thing over face to face, once and for all.

The first one I run into is our mutual maid, Marie.

"Here!" I says. "Go and tell Mrs. Harmon that I wouldst speak with her at once!"

I'll say that this here Marie curls a mean lip. Joe, she curled one at me and likewise made me a present of a briefly glance. Speakin' of that glance, for the first time in my life I knowed what a stale egg feels like when the guy which had mistakenly figured on devourin' it, gazes at it.

"I cannot disturb Mrs. Harmon," she says. "She gave me strict orders to——"

Joe—get *that*! Another mutineer, hey?

I waved my arms and shut her off, gettin' madder with each fleetin' second.

"Don't tell me no more about Mrs. Harmon's orders!" I hollers. "It looks to me like she's mixed up with more orders to-day than Sears and Roebuck ever seen. Might I be so bold as to ask what she's doin'?"

Marie give a sniff, but after a minute she decided to take a chance and turn state's evidence.

"She's entertaining at tea, sir," she says.

"Well," I says. "See if you can steer her away from them other dames and tell her I am leavin' here and must see her at once on a matter of life and death!"

"There are no other ladies present, sir," remarks Marie, with a odd grin.

"No other *ladies*?" I says in absolutely amazement. "Then who the—what——"

"A Mister Carstairs, sir," says Marie, and then they's a bell rings somewheres and lettin' drop a courtesy, as the sayin' is, she beats it—leavin' me pale and tremblin' with surprise, rage, pain, excitement and in the hands of the green eye demon jealousy.

Joe, I know you have prob'ly no doubt dropped this letter and let out a startlin' gasp when you read this, so I will wait 'til you recover.

Well, of course the first thing I wanted to do was to rush right in and commence slayin' to the right and left. I even thought for a second of callin' up a coupla marines I know and makin' a clean job of it. Joe, can you imagine Jeanne bein' at the odds with me and then havin' tea with a strange guy right in my own house? My Gawd! hey, Joe?

For a coupla minutes I just stood there like a sturdily oak swayin' from the side to side in a topical storm on the desert. I caught a flash at myself in the pier glass right at the height of my

rage and Joe, I never looked more handsome (My clothes is all tailor made now) though of course at the time I wasn't even thinkin' of that part of it. I never felt as bad as this before, Joe, except the first time I was requested to go out in No Man's Land and find out for myself is it true a baynet is the same as carbolic acid to a Jerry.

Havin' tea with a strange guy, hey? And I ain't even kidded as much as a amiable manicure girl since me and Jeanne has been wed. I been so faithful it must of been sickenin' and all the while she was prob'ly playin' with me like a cat and a mouse does!

Joe, I made up my mind right then and there that I was off women for life. You know the old sayin', Joe. "Look out for wine, women and song!" Well, that combination has runed whatever guys it ain't made famous and as they have now cut the wine part out of it and Jeanne had evidently double crossed me, it looked like they was nothin' left for me to do but sing in order to get any pleasure at all outa life, hey, Joe?

They say a woman ain't got no freedom at all and that a man can do whatever he pleases and get away with it, whilst on the others hand a woman has got to be as careful in her actions as a tightwad is with a nickel or the world will slip her the frapped shoulder. Well, I am convinced that

is 100 proof bunk, Joe, because if reputation was carfare no woman would have to walk home on account of losin' it and there's that! Us strongly men which is supposed to be brutes in disguise would forgive a good looker for dynamitin' the orphan asylum and also give her credit for not doin' more whilst she was at it and you know it. Why Joe, for a long time I thought that all juries was sworn in for was to acquit these delicate and refined dames which rather than have the unpleasant notoriety of a divorce, swung a mean revolver on their husbands which was inclined to be wayward and etc. But, Joe, when a *man* gets before a jury he can't very well cast no languishin' grins at 'em and therefore they pay a trifle attention to the evidence instead of his navy blue eyes and stream line curves, get me?

Joe, the average guy has got to hustle all his life night and day for what a woman can get with a merely pleasant smile at the critical minute, but the thing works out fifty-fifty because some women's smiles is *worth* all you hustled for, hey, Joe?

Well, to get away from this enjoyable subject, I fin'ly staggered down the steps of my formerly happy home and wend my way over to the railroad station in a heart broken trance. The idea that Jeanne might cast me aside in time had never struck me before, I been so busy and etc. and I felt

like goin' into the nearest drug store and askin' for a nip of drinkin' iodine or the like and thus end it all. Without scarcely knowin' what I was doin' I leaped on a train for New York and I bet all the passengers did nothin' but wonder who was that tall, handsome, square jaw young Greek's god which flang himself into a seat and gazed neither to the right or left, but out the window at the chewin' gum and malted milk signs all the way in, the while drummin' on the sill with a huge clench fist.

Joe, that was no less than me and woe would of betided anybody which crossed my paths right then, I'll tell Shantung!

I have got to go out to the foundry where they hammer out these movin' pictures now, Joe, so I must close. In my next postal I will tell you what happened after I went downtown and etc. so try and get some sleep until then, though I know you are crazy with excitement to hear the rest of it.

Wishin' myself the best of luck,

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON (The New
Othello.)

On the Enroute to Los Angeles.

Amigo JOE:

Well, Joe, you can see from the way I start off this letter that I have got all the languages at my

finger tips. I guess that's about as far as I'll ever get 'em, Joe, because I seem to find it impossibly to get 'em into my head. Instead of gettin' better under the treatment of this professor which took up the Hercules task of teachin' me, what English I have seems to be gettin' worse and Jeanne claims if I have any more relapses it won't be long before I can't even understand myself!

I am now on my way to the Coast, which is slang for California, Joe, and with me is Jeanne more charmin'ly than ever, my baby and our joint maid, Marie. We are goin' out to make some scenes for our first picture together, the title of which is called "Heavens Above!" and is a extremely sad tragedy, and Joe I am a riot in it and in at the least three places will rock the audience with sobs and etc. I have been tipped off that Fairbanks, Chaplin and Hart is writhin' around the lots out there with jealousy and has smashed dozens of cameras in their petty rage when they seen some of the film which was made here for the first reel. Well, Joe, I will be very cordially with them one and all and try and put them at their ease, because I don't believe in bein' up the stage with nobody and would rather die than get a swell head simply because I was born a natural actor and can't help it if I am a little better than the mob.

Well, you are prob'ly no doubt thinkin' never mind the hoakum, but let me know how did you make out with Jeanne after that lover's quarrel you got into that threatened to render you asunder. So without no more further ado I will take the plunge right into that part of it now.

When I got off of the train in New York that day determined to rush to the nearest lawyer and grab off a divorce, Joe, the first guy I run into is no less than Phil Bloom, the honest bookmaker, which same I ain't seen since Jeanne hurled me bodily into society. Well, Joe, you know they say that misery loves to be amongst company and I was as glad to see Phil again as the breweries would be to see 1918. He failed to fall on my neck and wildly embrace me or anything like that and for awhile he was very cool, on the grounds that I have become stuck up since I made money and have canned all my old friends of days and nights gone by. Well, Joe, you know that as a convincer I got no equals and few peers and as far as that goes I could convince the formerly kaiser he was in right at the present time so I had little trouble provin' to Phil that I was still true to my old pals, but that a married man has got to think of his wife first—also, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth. Speakin' of married life reminded me what I come down to New York for, so I dragged

Phil into the nearest one of them places which made crack ice famous and we had some 2.75. That is I had 2 and Phil had about 75, accordin' to the box score I was handed as a bill.

Then I ask Phil if he knows of a practical lawyer and he says that's what his cousin is and I says is he any good and Phil says he's got to be good, because he's descended from a family of lawyers and one of his ancient relatives handled all of King Solomon's breach of promise suits and is that good enough and I says yes.

Well, Phil says first come over to 42nd and Broadway with him because he has succeeded in makin' a date with his wife and she will be glad to see me again and is less liable to bawl him out if he's got a spectator with him. Well, Joe, although my heart feels like it weighs a coupla tons at the least, I put on a gaily air and went with him, and Mrs. Bloom shows up promptly one hour late. Joe, Phil has got the prettiest wife on Lenox Avenue between 116th and 117th Street and how a dame which is such a knockout as she is ever fell for Phil is somethin' for bigger brains than mine to tussle with. She makes a large fuss over me and asks how's Jeanne and my baby and why do I look so wore out and do I like Phil's new hat which she picked out for him and what do I think about Prohibition and etc., and I says yes.

Well, before I can tell her what is on my mind she makes the claim that she is goin' to a employment agency for the purposes of gettin' a maid and she won't have it no other way but that I got to go with 'em. Joe, as I have reached the stages where I care not what happens, I call a taxi and we all roll off together to this place, in spite of the fact that Phil says me and him's got a important engagement at the Hotel Astor. Mrs. Bloom killed that off by sayin' they is no use for Phil to keep the engagement because only last night her brother told her that the Astor was one of the latest places to take prohibition seriously and Phil might as well start in snubbin' the saloons now before the doors was locked in his face, which is what's gonna happen.

Well, Joe, I must tell you what came to the pass in the employment agency, because I got more laughs there than Chaplin ever handed me, and if Keith would send a scout around to them places he'd find enough promisin' vaudeville material to give him the writer's cramps from signin' contracts.

The first applicant for the portfolio of maid which Mrs. Bloom begin to interview, give us all a sarcastical up and down and Mrs. Bloom says:

"I am looking for a girl who will do the——"

"What's the population of your family, hey?"
butts in the maid.

Phil starts to giggle, but the Mrs. shuts him off.

"There are three of us," she says, with a pleasantly smile. "Myself, my husband, and the baby. He's four years old."

"Humph!" snorts the maid. "I gotta kid to take care of, hey? What are you willin' to pay?"

"Well," stalls Mrs. Bloom. "Of course you will have your room and board and——"

"And laundry!" puts in the maid.

"Why—don't you wash?" asks Mrs. Bloom in surprise.

"What's the matter, ain't my face clean?" snaps the maid.

Me and Phil give ourselves up to the hystericals.

"Oh—why—excuse me!" stammers Mrs. Bloom, "I meant, don't you do washing?"

"You can say I don't," says the maid, with a sneer. "Them days is over! I gotta have two days off the week and I want \$60 a month. Is the kid much trouble?"

"That will do!" says Mrs. Bloom, risin' and gettin' sore. "You may go. I'm sure you would not be satisfactory."

"Heh—I should worry!" says the maid, driftin' away with her beak turned up in what was prob'ly disgust.

The next candidate is shooed over, but not be-

fore the first one has stopped her and whispered a few tips in her ear.

"I am looking for a girl who——" begins Mrs. Bloom.

"Yeh!" interrupts the newcomer with a yawn. "How far is the nearest movie theatre from where you live?"

"Why—I—about four blocks," says Mrs. Bloom.

"Kin I have callers?" is the next question.

"Well—I suppose so, when you are through your work," says Mrs. Bloom.

The applicant give forth a sniff.

"I suppose you got a talkin' machine, hey?" she asks.

"Yes," says Mrs. Bloom, kinda dazed.

"Well, have you got the 'Coffee Pot Blues', 'Razzin' The Jazz' and 'The Hashish Shimmy'?" says the maid.

"Haw haw—tie *that!*" hollers Phil.

"I ain't in the habit of bein' laughed at!" says the maid, with a glare at us. Mrs. Bloom seems to be in a trance.

"I don't know," she says in a weak voice. "I suppose so. We have all the latest records. If we haven't the ones you mention I'll—I'll get them and——"

"Do you do a lotta entertainin' and have what is knowed as week end guests, which makes a lotta

extry dishes and the like to wash?" demands the maid.

"I do not care to discuss my guests with you," says Mrs. Bloom, comin' to life and them lovely eyes of her sparklin' 'til any pawnbroker which wouldn't loan you \$1,000 the each on 'em would be silly. "I'm afraid you won't do!"

"Did I claim I craved the job?" sneers the maid, friskin' away.

Mrs. Bloom throws up her hands.

"Did you ever see anything to equal this?" she says. "Of all the impudence! Why, I've never been so insulted——"

"I wish them maids was men!" says Phil, bangin' his fists together and glarin' at 'em all. "I could furnish you with a *little* entertainment anyways!"

Over comes another one, Joe. This here czarina of the kitchen was big enough to make Dempsey jump outa the ring and me and Phil moved to one side. Mrs. Bloom starts right off, very determined.

"Look here, my girl," she says. "I will pay you \$50 a month, give you a nice room, your board and every other Sunday off. You do not have to do washing. There are only three of us in the family and we have a seven room apartment. How does that strike you?"

"No spika da Engleesh!" says the maid.

"*You're hired!*" hollers Mrs. Bloom. "Get your things and come with me now!"

And that's what happened.

Well, Joe, when we got up to Phil's apartment, Mrs. Bloom, which always liked me, sends Phil out to see what a few dollars can do in a delicatessen store and calls me into the livin' room. She makes me sit down and then she pulls up a chair, pats me on the shoulder and asks me what's on my mind. Joe, she was so sympathetic and is such a good looker and etc. that she just hit me right and what do I do but pour out the whole business to her about me and Jeanne and the strange guy which was havin' the pleasure of tea with her and then I wound up by sayin' I was in New York for the purposes of gettin' a divorce.

Well, Joe, for a minute she don't say nothin' but instead walks around the room and then she comes over and sits down again and tells me I am all wrong. She says I am the luckiest guy on earth to have a wife like Jeanne and a baby like I got, and also to of been such a startlin' success and if I bust it all up now I am a bigger boob than she thought I was. She claims that every married couple devotes some time each year to legitimate quarrelin' and when they don't they is somethin' wrong and if I would get rid of some of the conceit I got and remember that the population of the

world runs into billions and they are not all named Ed. Harmon I would be all right, because I have got a barrel of traits for which she can't help likin' me, but I am my own worst enemy and very tryin' at times. She also lets fall the information that Jeanne has got a right to be sore, because it must of been very humiliatin' for me to drag in that butler and introduce him to the high society leader at Jeanne's costume ball. Well, Joe, all this bein' hauled over the coal and etc. commences to get me nervous and I says I have come to her for advice and not to be bawled out, because if I wish to be bawled out I could of stayed home and got better service without spendin' the carfare to New York.

Joe, with that she puts her hand under my chin and pushes up my face 'til we are lookin' at each other right in the eye and she comes out point blank and asks me do I really love Jeanne. I leaped up from the chair and I says that I would cut off my right arm for the privilege of havin' Jeanne put hers around me once again and call me "*Cherie!*" like she used to do. Well, Joe, at that I told a lie. I should of said that I would cut off *both* arms and consider a proposition to remove a leg!

Well, Mrs. Bloom grins and says I am no less than a big baby and should get spanked and she will tell me what to do to fix things up and just



— ABOUT WILLIAM BROWN —

“‘Send him in!’ I hollers in a voice which would have quailed Jack Dempsey”

then who comes in but Phil, full of bundles. Whilst the new maid is puttin' plates under dill pickles, cold ham, tongue and in fact all the headline acts at a delicatessen, Mrs. Bloom 'phones to the station and finds out when the next train leaves for my castle up on Hudson's River. I am in the midst of tellin' my troubles all over again to Phil, when she comes back and says to lay off, that I don't have to tell the world about it and what I want to do is to go and buy Jeanne a present and get up there as quick as I can. Well, I says all right, I will get a box of candy and Mrs. Bloom says once a boob, always a boob and come with her. Joe, before I can protest she has got on her hat, and her and Phil dragged me around the corner to a jeweller's and still in a daze I pick out a dinner ring consistin' of thirteen diamonds and a slew of platinum, and when I leave, this guy has got my autograph on a check for \$1,450, though at that I beat him down from \$1,600.

Mrs. Bloom says hurry up and grab the train and when I get there, walk right in like a man and throw my arms around my wife and apologize for everything whether I done it or not and then give her the ring, and if Jeanne don't fall, *she* will pay me what the ring set me back herself! Well, Joe, I shook hands with her and says she is a prince and I am a lucky guy to have her for a friend and if

Phil wasn't there and I wasn't wed I would kiss her outa pure gratitude and she says thanks, but she will try and bear up without it. Then I says how can Jeanne explain that strange guy she was havin' tea with and Mrs. Bloom says don't be silly that means nothin' and no doubt it was a old friend and suppose *I* called to have tea with *her* would they be anything wrong in that and I says yes, because I don't drink tea and never could. So she says to quit the small time comedy, Joe, and hustle for my train and forget about the guy which was havin' tea with Jeanne and everything will no doubt be explained to my satisfaction. As a example, for instance, she says a old school chum once called on her when Phil was out and yet Phil never said nothin' because he's sensible and at that Phil speaks up and says yes, he was a old school chum and also a old admirer which tried to marry you, and Mrs. Bloom says he did no such thing and one word led to the other and when I left, Joe, they was doin' a act which was a outright steal from the one me and Jeanne did in Harmony Hall.

Well, Joe, I barely managed to catch the train, but such was the case and in the due course I arrived at Harmony Hall. I was tightly clutchin' the \$1,450 ring, which is a criminally waste of money, but after all it's cheaper than payin'

alimony, Joe, and my heart is full of peace and good will to one and all. On the way up to the house from the station, Joe, I was thinkin' of how I am gonna heap coals and fire on Jeanne's head by givin' her this elegant ring after she has been so unkindly to me and all in all by the time I reach the portals of my country's estate I am in high good humor, as the sayin' is. I marched boldly up to the door and ring the bell and no less than Marie, our charmin' maid, comes out.

"Tell Mrs. Harmon that her husband wouldst see her immediately in the library!" I says.

"I am afraid that madame is still occupied with Mister Carstairs," says Marie, "but I will take your message and——"

Joe, at that second all my good intentions resigned! The idea of a strange guy sittin' in my house talkin' with Jeanne all this time whilst she won't even give *me* a tumble, is too much for my nerves. I made up my mind that the time for action had came and without another word I sailed passed Marie into the house, whilst she gazed after me in frankly astonishment. Joe, I could hardly see what I was thinkin' about I was so enrage and all I wanted to do was meet up with this baby which was in there drinkin' tea with my wife, tear him limb and limb and make him like it! I had no weapons with me, but I figured they must

be a chair or the like in the room and I can swing as mean a piece of furniture as the next one.

I come to the upstairs drawin's room, Joe, and I listened for a minute and heard Jeanne's voice and then it was quiet. Without no more further beatin' about the bushes, I rapped on the door. They was little or no answer and I banged on it a coupla more times with the identical result. Well, Joe, I remembered they was another door in the room leadin' to a back stairway, so I beat it around to that, thinkin' that if this guy was gonna duck he wouldst go out that way and I could then nail him with the greatest of ease. I tried the door and it was locked and they wasn't a sound from the inside so I stopped for a minute and give myself over to thinkin'. Joe, in a second I had made up my mind what to do. I knowed full well that this was a thing which would make Jeanne off of me for life, but I couldn't stand the suspense no longer, so I decided to end the thing and be done with it. Clampin' my teeth down hard, I took one leap at that door and it give way and me and it crashed into the room.

Well, Joe, they wasn't nobody therein but Jeanne and she looked at me kinda scared for a minute and I guess I was fairly wild lookin' at that. Joe, I hadn't seen her for a week and she looked so good to me standin' there with her cheeks

commencin' to get the color of red and them eyes which I have kissed eight million times in round numbers, sparklin' and etc. that I almost forgot I was a outraged husband comin' to reek vengeance on one and all. Before I could open my mouth she says.

"Why do you then break down my door, Edouard?"

"I wanted to see you!" I pants.

Joe, she took a slightly step toward me and throws that million dollar smile of hers into high.

"You would break down the door to come to me?" she whispers.

"That ain't *nothin'*," I says, "I would of tear the whole house apart in a coupla more minutes if——"

"Ah!" she says, very low and still lookin' at me kinda funny, "but that is *magnifique!* You do then love Jeanne?"

Joe, I didn't stop to try and dope out this here sudden change or why she should think bustin' in a door was fine business, when I had expected she would gimme a bawlin' out I'd never forget. Guys have spent lifetimes tryin' to figure out women and *then* got the wrong answer, so why should *I* try to do it in a coupla minutes? I was across that room in a jump and Jeanne was in my manly arms and why not and speakin' about me

lovin' her—well, we got *that* all settled, anyways!

Well, the next thing when we come to our senses I placed that \$1,450 ring on her finger and that didn't make matters no worse neither and she kept lookin' at the door and then at me and murmurin' about what a wonderful guy I am to let nothin' stand before me when I wanna see my wife. Fin'ly I says:

"You act like this was the first time you knew I was tryin' to square myself with you. Why I been sendin' you notes by the way of our maid all week and you wouldn't even answer 'em. How do you account for that?"

"Ah!" she sighs. "What then are notes? Those are for women to write. But a man—when he wants something he *takes* it—if he is indeed a *man*! You look so big and so terrible when you come—plunk!—through the door, *cherie*, that Jeanne is afraid she will—how you have it?—fall in love with you all over again, *n'est ce pas?*"

Well, Joe, I says nothin', but for a minute I was thinkin' it might be a good idea for me to bust a coupla more doors and some windows and in that way get in solid for life, hey? Joe, they is a chance that some day I may be able to understand French, Greek, algeometry, and the League of Nations, but if I live to be a million I'll never understand women—and there's that!

Then all of a sudden I remembered the guy which had been there quaffin' off flagons of tea and I stepped away from her, very sternly and cold.

"Where is that boy friend of yours which you was entertainin' here?" I says.

She looks puzzled, Joe.

"Why——" she begins, when there is a knock at the door.

"It is I, Marie," says the maid from the other side of it, "Mister Carstairs is here."

Like the flash I remembered that was the name of the guy which had been havin' the tea. I gently pushed Jeanne to the one side and started takin' off my coat. Jeanne looks at me like she thinks I have gone crazy or the like.

"Send him in!" I hollers, in a voice which would of quailed Jack Dempsey. I am set to let this guy have it the minute he steps over my threshold, Joe.

Well, the door opens and a gay young dog of about seventy, hobbles into the room. He looks from me to Jeanne and then he says:

"You'll pardon me, Mrs. Harmon, for disturbing you again, but I believe I left my Roget's Thesaurus here."

Jeanne picks up a book from the table and hands it to him.

"I was about to send the maid after you with it," she smiles, "Professor Carstairs, this is my husband."

Joe, you could of knocked me over with a gasp! I am standin' there lookin' like a dizzy simp with my coat half off and etc. and this old guy must of thought Jeanne picked out a fine hick for herself when she drawed me. I remember shakin' his hand like in a trance and him givin' me a queer look and bowin' himself out.

"Who the—what—who's that guy?" I says, when he had blowed.

"You have not see him before?" says Jeanne, raisin' her eyebrows. "That is Professor Carstairs, of the college. He is my English teacher. I have my lesson to-day and then I make him stay for tea—he is such a nice old gentleman and it is so cold outdoors. But Edouard—why do you act so strange when you hear his name before he come in?"

Joe, I am busy moppin' off my fever brow with a handkerchief.

"I—I thought he was a guy I knew," I says, puttin' my arms around her. "Jeanne—I guess I'm just a big boob and I'll always be one! I had you figured all wrong to-day, never mind askin' me to explain—let's forget about it. I'm sorry for what I've done and you ain't ever gonna get

away from me for no week no more. I'll try not to make no more bone plays like in the days of yore and I'll keep right on studyin' this here grammar thing, but I want you to do somethin' for me."

"What is it, *cherie*?" she says, kissin' me.

"Well," I says. "You gotta cut out these here parties and dances. That's what caused all the trouble between us and this continual dress suit stuff has gotta go! I don't want 'em up here and I don't wanna go to their places. This ain't Carnegie Hall, it's my home and I wanna come in here once in awhile, without havin' to be announced, get me? We ain't neither the Vanderbilts or even the Astors and as far as I'm concerned, this society thing runs for the end book. They's scarcely a night we ain't rushin' off somewheres and when we was first wed and didn't have a nickel, you was tickled silly to wile away the evenin' with me. It's gotta stop, Jeanne! Now I have gave up a lot for you, won't you give this up for me?"

She thinks a minute, Joe.

"*Tres bien!*" she says fin'ly. "It shall be as you wish. I had thought to have just the few guests—say fifteen or twenty—here next Tuesday night and then there was Mrs. Worthley's masquerade and—but, *viola!*—if you do not like it, it shall not be! I had my blue silk Poiret altered,

too," she winds up kinda sad, "but *you* come first always!"

"That's the girl!" I says. "Why I'm so sick of climbin' into a dress suit that——"

Joc, just then the 'phone rings and Jeanne answers it. They is a series of yes and noes and *certainments* and *charmants*. Then Jeanne hangs up the receiver and runs to me all excited.

"Quick!" she says. "You have just the bare time to shave. I'll have Marie press your evening clothes while you're shaving. We have been invite to Mrs. Carrington De Ray's dinner dance and you must make *beaucoup* hurry!"

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON (A Innocently
Victim of Love).

CHAPTER VII

A WORD TO THE WIVES

SEVENTH INNING

Out in Lovely California.

Carissima JOE: (Whatever that is!)

Well, Joe, here I am prowlin' around in no less than the state which kept manys the movie actor out of the poorhouse and likewise kept Charles E. Hughes out of the White House. By the latter, Joe, I am speakin' of the fact that California was the final state to ratify Wilson at the last election we had to see who would be the victim of the pranks of Congress for a period of four years. But leavin' politics to the one side, Joe, this is a wonderful country out here and the natives is as friendly as if they was all runnin' for alderman and not like in New York where if you ask a strange guy what time it is or the etc., he will say in a coldly voice: "Search me, I'm a stranger around here myself!" and continue on his way.

Me and Jeanne is only gonna be here for a brief stay, or in the other words, just long enough to make a few heart renderin' scenes for our

first movin' picture, the title of which is called "Heavens Above!" like I told you in one of my many last letters. After that, Joe, we are goin' down to Havana or one of them other So. African joints and enjoy the pleasures of a vacation. I can't tell you the exact post office address where we are goin' as yet, Joe, because naturally that part of it is up to our maid and we ain't had a chance to talk it over with her so far.

Well, I will certainly be glad when areyoplanes gets to be more reasonably in price and I will be one of the first to buy, so's that when I got another one of them long distance trips to make *toot sweet* I will not have to go by way of no railroad and there's that! We squandered away the best part of a week gettin' out here, Joe, and I had no idea America was so large, on account of the National League endin' at St. Looley. If Columbus really found all of this in 1880 or whatever the exact date was, I am forced to say that as a discoverer this guy was *beaucoup*. I'll bet he could of even discovered why China should be wildly in love with the League of Nations, hey, Joe?

But at that they is nothin' like travel to improve the mind and strengthen the education. For instance, on account of us Americans goin' across whilst the war was bein' had, Joe, the Germans found out more about the U. S. than

they ever would of got out of any books and the etc. and I bet that the kaiser has wished manys the time he had read up on what we done in 1776, 1812 and 1898, instead of wilin' away the time figurin' how many Germans had took up life in America durin' a given period of ten years, hey? And on the other hands, Joe, the trip done us Americans a lotta good likewise. For the example let us take, viz, manys the doughboy and leather-neck had the idea they was at the least as many words in the German's language as they is in ours. Well, you can see at the glance how ridiculous *that* turned out to be. Instead of a coupla million nouns, verbs, adjectives and the like, we made the sensational discovery that the German's language consisted of only one word and that was "*Kamerad!*" which is spoke with both arms extended upwards and I trust the college professors will see this and not go on teachin' "*Guten morgan, mine herrin'!*" and the etc., which turned out to be of no use to us durin' the time we was the Germans' guests at war.

But to get away from the war, as the kaiser says, I don't want no more of them long distance railroad jaunts in mine and after a half hour on the board of a train I have got enough railroadin' to do me for the rest of my life. Joe, it gets terribly monotony gazin' out the window at the

United States bein' whirled by with the break your neck speed hours after hours and the Ethey-opium decoy for the dinin' room comin' through from the time to time remarkin' "Last calls for dinner!" and travellin' salesmen havin' a lyin' bee with each other about^r orders they have just took, which if half the amount they name was true they would have J. P. Morgan and his boy friends lookin' like worthy candidates for the almshouse. Then too, Joe, they is always the guy which havin' failed to draw any damagin' testimony from you by askin' what is your line, politics, religion, favorite ice cream soda and the etc., plays his ace by sayin' have you ever been through this part of the country before? Well, Joe, if you say no, you immediately get treated to a illustrated lecture without the pictures, until you feel like the guy which havin' took a coupla hours punishment from one of them self confessed globe trotters, butts in on his tormentor by askin' if the former ever enjoyed delerium tremens and when the guy says he ain't, his victim hollers: "Then shut up. You ain't seen *nothin'* and you ain't been *nowheres*!"

Well, Joe, by the second day of the voyage I have talked over every subject in the world with Jeanne and like Wilson and Congress we agreed on nothin' and I have read the timetable over 'til at the drop of the hats I could rise up and sing it,

not that nobody asked me to. So the next thing I begin to get as nervous and restlessly as St. Vitus. Well, Jeanne looks me over for awhile and claims I am gettin' her goat by jumpin' up and down in the seat all the time and why don't I go out in the smoker with the men where no doubt I would be more at home and the etc. I have never denied Jeanne nothin', Joe, since we have been a man and a wife and if she desired a change of scenery like she plainly hinted, they was nothin' left for me to do but see that she got the same, hey? Well, as I am takin' my leave of the seat, Jeanne says I had better wear my hat with me and I says how can I when our tickets is stickin' in the hat band and suppose the conductor should make his daily rounds whilst I am gone? Joe, Jeanne gimme a sarcastical grin and says is they anything to stop me from takin' the tickets outa the hat and givin' 'em to her and a elderly lady in the seat behind let forth a snicker and runed my exit. Anyways, I hung on to the timetable, Joe, so's I could check up on the towns which we was supposed to pass through and see that the railroad people didn't hold none of 'em out on me. You know what them millionaires is, hey, Joe?

Well, I went out to the smokin' room of this Pullman's car which was named by the guy which has charge of christenin' all the apartment houses,

hotels, ocean's liners and collars, it bein' called the "Ordopolis" or words to that effect and they was four guys sittin' there quiet and gloomy havin' evidently lied themselves sick. Joe, the ground and lofty lies which is gave birth to in the smokin' room of a train or a ship would make Annie Nias seem like George Washington. I don't know what does it, but it seems that the minute a normally truthful voter lays back in them cushions with somethin' in the smokin' line in his mouth and a strange victim sittin' opposite, he immediately begins to reel off adventures he has partaken of and etc., which if they was only one half of one per cent. true would have Robinson & Crusoe, Davy Crockett and Gen. Custer lookin' like white-liver stay at homes. The minute he gets out into the fresh air he becomes honestly and trustworthy again, but whilst he's in that smokin' room I'll say he swings a mean tongue!

Joe, these four babies which has no doubt run a dead heat for the chatter championship of the world, looks up at me kinda hopeful when I darken the threshold with my presence, because here was some new material to work on and the guy I sit next to is determined he ain't gonna be left flat footed at the post.

"Goin' far?" he says, with the unmistakably train liar's glitter in his eyes.



“‘No,’ I says, ‘I ain’t Douglas Fairbanks. *I’m* Mary Pickford. I checked my curls in the baggage car no more than I got on the train.’”

"Well," I says, "I guess Peary's mark will still be standin' when I get through. I'm checked to Los Angeles."

"Umph!" he says, chewin' away on his cigar; "Great country that—great country! Ever been out there before?"

"Nope!" I says. "But I ain't worryin' about that part of it. I'll take a chance that the engineer will find the burg all right. He ain't missed a town so far."

"Ha, ha!" he says. "That's good!" He looks me up and down with the greatest of care, Joe, and the other three guys does the likewise.

"Travellin' man?" says the first guy, whilst the three-man jury leans forward to hear my confession.

"As a matter of fact, I'm a actor," I says, with a cheerfully grin.

He gimme another careful inspection and then he says.

"Well, you don't look it!"

"I ain't tryin' to!" I admits and devotes the rest of my attention to the timetable.

One of the other guys released a snicker, but this baby was game!

"Vaudeville?" he says.

"That'll come later," I says, my goat com-

mencin' to rear and prance under this here civil service examination. "Right now I'm a movin' picture addict."

"Well, well, well!" exclaims this guy, sittin' back and gazin' at me with open admiration, "I thought you had a kinda familiar look. You're not Douglas Fairbanks by any chance, are you?"

Joe, that was about all I could take. I figured in another minute this guy would ask me if I had any letters on me I could let him read to wile away the time!

"No," I says. "I ain't Douglas Fairbanks—I'm Mary Pickford. I checked my curls in the baggage car no more than I got on the train!"

At that, Joe, the other three guys bust out in hysterically laughter and this baby laid off.

One of the other pests immediately leans over to me.

"Now this here League of Nations is——" he begins.

"I don't wanna hear no off color stories!" I shuts him off with a wave of the hand.

Two down!

Boob number three is next.

"My name's Hawkins," he says, movin' over and presentin' me with what he no doubt thought was a pleasant grin, "I'm with Rabinowitz & O'Reilly of Chicago, the big putty concern. I

cleaned up back in Denver—sold a total of a hundred thousand dollars' worth!"

"Then they ain't no more putty left in the world, if that's true!" I says.

"Ha, ha!" he giggles. "Say—where have I seen you before, hey?"

"I give it up!" I remarks, with a long drawed out yawn. "Maybe it was in east Arabia, or the etc."

"Like as not," he says, noddin' his head. Then he tries his hand at a new one. "Say—can you imagine this whole country goin' dry?"

"You don't have to bother with imaginin' it no more," I says. "It *is*!"

"A infernal outrage!" he hollers, warmin' up to his work and glancin' around at the other innocent bysitters. "What right has them bums got to tell *me* what I can drink?"

"They ain't tellin' you what you *can* drink," I corrects him. "They're tellin' you what you *can't* drink!"

"Well, it's the same thing!" he bellers, bangin' his fist on his knee and glarin' wildly around. "How dare them fatheads in Washington take away *my* personal libertics like I was a three-months old young infant? They call this the Land of the Free, hey? Why I——"

"When they called it the Land of the Free,"

I says, "they was no doubt speakin' of advice and air. But they's one thing them guys has done which I give 'em credit for—it ain't gonna be the Land of the Spree and the Home of the Rave no more, anyways!"

"Ha!" he snorts. "So you're one of them prohibitionists, hey?"

"Stop kiddin' me!" I says. "What I really am is a American. I ain't gonna commit myself as to whether I think nationally prohibition is O. K. or the otherwise, but I'll say that as long as it's a U. S. made law I'm gonna hold by it and——"

"I gotta tip that Wilson is gonna call the whole thing off any day now!" butts in another guy.

"We won the war with booze, didn't we?" yells Hawkins, the sensation of the putty industry.

"Where d'ye get that *we* stuff?" I says. "On the level now, the nearest you come to the war was when you clipped your first Liberty Bond coupons, wasn't it?"

"I gotta weak heart," he says, very dignified. "Or I would——"

"Then you oughta be glad you can't get no booze," I butts in. "A good drunk would prob'ly bump you off!"

"I never was drunk in my life!" he bawls. "I'm a respectable citizen, a taxpayer and I don't owe no man a nickel. For more than ten years

I've taken a coupla shots a day, has it hurt me? No! I never have sang no ribald songs and I got my first gutter to roll in as a result of partakin' now and again and yet they ain't a day that I haven't had my little jolt. D'ye think I'm gonna let a bunch of simps tell *me* I can't have a drink? I should say not!"

"Well," I says. "All I can say is that you have taken on a large contract when you are gettin' ready to defy the dear old U. S. A. If Germany couldn't lick America, where do *you* get off?"

"As long as they make it I'll get it!" he hollers, caperin' about.

"I hear if you take three raisins, a bottle of grape juice and a cake of yeast," butts in another guy. "You can——"

The fourth guy which is sittin' in a corner and ain't said a word up to thus far, yanks out a card and a pencil.

"How many raisins is that again?" he says.

Joe, I hadda laugh at 'em all takin' down this guy's prescription and it must be tough to be a slave to Jack Barleycorn, hey? The bird with the distiller's secret asked me if I wanted the loan of a pencil and I says no in a rather contemptuously manner. I wouldn't lower myself openin' a still in my own home and besides I have tried that stuff and it's rotten.

Well, Joe, then this Hawkins guy looks all around the car kinda mysterious and winks at us one and all and says would anybody like a slight swaller. Lickin' of lips become general and when Hawkins suddenly pulls out a flask from his hip pocket you could hear them guys' thirsts beatin' like a tom tom. Even the silent guy in the corner flicked a mean eyelash, Joe. Well, the flask was passed around whilst Hawkins says it's only a pint and he hadda pay six berries for it, whereas in the old days before we become a desert six dollars' worth of booze would be enough to float a yacht in. He hands the flask of this here forbidden fruit to the first guy and says to hurry up and kill one quick before the conductor comes in or he's liable to get pinched and gave about 42 years for bein' found with the demon's rum on him. From the longin' look on this other baby's face, Joe, you could see that they was little or no need to tell him to hurry and get that drink. It took about a eighth of a second to hand him the flask, yet he nearly died of impatience.

"Well, here's a go!" he says and the next second he has leaped a coupla feet in the air and is coughin' and splutterin' all over the place. "Wow!" he chokes out. "What the—Hey, what is that stuff—ammonia?"

"It's very high proof—must be all of 110,"

says the proud owner, whilst the next guy is goin' astray. "Of course, what you get nowadays ain't up to the old stuff. You're in luck if you can get *anything* sneaked to you at all. I suppose maybe there is some prune juice in it for colorin'."

"Prune juice, hey?" says the second guy handin' back the flask with his face all screwed up in a knot. "They may have *started* it off with prune juice, but that ain't the half of it. I know now why they call it bootleg licker. It's because it's prob'ly made outa castaway boots. The guy which throwed that mess together oughta be took out and shot. I'm cured!"

The flask was handed to the quiet guy in the corner which took a whiff of it first, let forth a sigh and tied in. After what seemed like a week he come up for air. Joe, he was gaspin' for his breath like a fresh caught flounder, his eyes was rollin' around kinda wild and his face was as red as a four-alarm fire. He tried about five times to say somethin', but they was nothin' stirrin'. I commenced to get kinda alarmed, Joe, because this guy acted like he had just quaffed off a swallow of carbolic and I was thinkin' I would no doubt be held as a witness, when fin'ly he hands me over the flask.

"Whoosh!" he pants, shakin' his head kinda dazed. "That's the best whiskey I ever tasted!"

The other guys laughed and Hawkins says for

me to go light, because that's all he's got and he don't know when he'll be able to dig up some more and whilst on the subject not to forget that the pint had set him back six bucks. Well, Joe, I took hold of this molten gold outa purely curiosity. You know that I never at no time was no bar fly, bein' content with a trifle beer or ale from the time to time which any saloonkeeper will tell you is good for the health, but you also know that they ain't no human bein' which don't relish somethin' they been told they can't have. It started off with Eve, which prob'ly wouldn't of give that eggplant, or mushmelon, or apple or whatever it really was, a second glance if she hadn't of been laid off of it—get me? And then again it would be very unsociably for me to not take no drink when all the rest of 'em had and besides I was so nervous from that day in and day out ridin' on the train that I felt a slightly stimulant would do me good.

So the result was, Joe, that I took eight or prob'ly nine drops of this here booze which went into my stomach about as courteously and polite as the Germans went through Belgium and it was three minutes in round numbers before I could even talk. Sweet Cookie—if that's the kinda stuff which is bein' sneaked around now, I'm off for life! I would much rather gulp down a seidel of carbolec which is cheaper and quicker. If this

Hawkins guy sent in six bucks for that pint of paris green he paid about 60 cents a drink for it, hadda humiliate himself and act like a hophead tryin' to get dope when he bought it and with each swaller he took about 24 hours off his life. And yet them guys which simply got to have it, think they're puttin' somethin' over. Well, they are, Joe, on *themselves* !

Before leavin' the smoker, Joe, I stopped beside the seat of the quiet guy which was all by himself in a corner and still lookin' like he was in a trance from that drink he took. He was mumblin' to himself and I felt kinda worried about him.

"Are you a travellin' salesman too?" I says.

"Heh—oh, sure!" he says, with a kinda wild look in his eye. "Oh my yes. Absotively! I cover Arizona, Colorado and Wyoming. Oh yes!"

"What are *you* sellin'?" I says.

"Lighthouses!" he snarls.

With that I beat it, Joe.

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (The new Mary
Pickford).

On the Enroute back to N. Y.

FRIEND JOE:

Well, here I am bein' wafted back again to my delicious country's estate on the banks of the

Hudson far away. We have got the movin' picture, viz and to the ie, "Heavens Above!" all made and it come out fine, Joe. When you stop to consider that I have never been no actor before you will get a faint idea of how unusually wonderful it was for me to get away with the thing like a battle scarred old experienced veteran of the screens and Jeanne come off with the flyin' colors likewise. Joe, I feel surely that Jeanne is gonna turn out to be a great favorite with the movie fans, especially as from now on all the pictures she appears in will be made with no less than *me* takin' off the part of the dashin' young hero. I have got a good mind to write all the pictures myself for the future also, Joe, and in that way we could save the expenses of havin' to pay them sceneryaro composers which in these days is gettin' prices for their wares that makes it look like anybody which works with his head for a livin' is a sucker. They is no doubt that I could write as good a movie as the next one if I tried my hand at it, Joe, because I have got several drops of author's blood in me on account of once bein' related to a cousin which was a professional writer. Of course, I admit he was a bookkeeper, but still and all it shows that I oughta be able to fling a mean pen myself as blood will tell, hey, Joe?

Well, speakin' of the art of writin', Joe, I have

already busted into the song writin' game as a side line and am now considerin' a proposition I have made to myself to tear off a six or seven act play some night when I got a hour or so to spare. Then no doubt I will tie right into paintin', classically singin' and the etc., as a man with the talents nature has made me a present of would be nothin' less than the height of selfishness if he kept them to himself.

The song I have wrote, Joe, is known by the title of the followin', "I Cannot Wed a Guy Which Has No Lovers' Union Card!" It goes like thus:

A couple of young gently lovers
Was softly sittin' on a bench
Whilst honest workin' men rolled by in limousines.
The girl glared at her steady, a shabby millionaire
And as the moon begin to sink, her sweet voice tore the air,

CHORUS:

I been wild about you Adolph, eight hours every day,
Which is all the sweethearts' union will allow.
I'd like to grant your slight request and join you as your
 wife,
But I'd be afraid I'd have to bust my vow.
For as you was about to kiss me they might call me out on
 strike,
So go and join a Local and I'll do as you like.
I got nothin' else against you and I know this must be hard,
But I cannot wed a guy which has no lovers' union card!

Well, there's that, Joe, and I am workin' on extry verses now as you can see that it is not only a remarkable piece of poetry, but is likewise boilin' over with sentiment and is as timely as snow at Christmas. You know they is all kinds of unions 'now and strikes is as plentiful as blondes with light hair, so I have no doubt that this song will soon be sweepin' the country and should net me a plumber's ransom in the royalties.

I read it to the guy which directed our movin' picture, Joe, and he hadn't the slightest hesitation in awardin' it the brown derby as a song. He is a guy which ain't easy affected, yet still and all he was completely overcame with the emotion and made me read it about twenty-five times on account of the sad story of thwarted love which it tells. After awhile, Joe, he wipes his eyes and asks me what is the tune of it and I says that's right I had absolutely forgot that in order to make a song you have got to have a trifle music besides the words. Well, Joe, he says never mind, I could no doubt have it set to the air of the "Star Spangled Banner" which would give it a patriotic punch and would also at the least make everybody stand up and remove their hats whilst they was hearin' it. But I says no, I would rather have some fresh, new tune wrote for it and I will send a copy to Irvin S. Berlin and ask him to do his best

with a good, snappy air and I will divide the loot we get outa it on a even basis of 90-10 and ten percent. of what this ballad will make should at least get him a coupla hundred thousand for *his* bit. Well, Joe, the director says that guy wouldst only jazz it to death and what I should try to do for a knockout song like I have wrote is to get lined up with either Mendellsohn, Beethoven or a bird called Gounoud. So, Joe, I wish you wouldst look them babies up in the 'phone book whilst you are in New York and give them the dope on this for me and the minute I land I will prob'ly no doubt sign one of 'em up, provided they don't demand too much sugar for the few minutes' work they wouldst have to do on this song, which once it's let forth will make them known the country over.

Well, Joe, just to show you what the average wife is after the hypnotism of honeymoonin' has passed away, I read this here masterpiece to Jeanne, naturally thinkin' that once she heard it she would fall on the top of my neck and holler that I was a *genus*. It was far be it from such, Joe. When I got all through she wiggles her shoulders coldly, makes what the French calls a little moo with her mouth and says *Ciel !* she can't understand why it is that my English fails to respond to all the treatment it's had from them professors and the

etc. When I could get my breath back I says in a deadly voice don't she like it and she says instantly *Mais non !* she thinks it is inclined to be silly and if I will get my Third Reader out she will try me on some verbs, adjectives, and the etc., in the effort to get us to the point so that when we squander away time by talkin' to each other she can at the least understand what I am talkin' about.

For a moment I was practically dumfounded, Joe, to think that my own wife should develope such little interest in "I Cannot Wed A Guy Which Has No Lovers' Union Card!", the song which will prob'ly no doubt rock the world once it is turned loose and take its proper place amongst such riots as "The Battle Hymn of the Republicans" and "God Help The King" etc. Well, I was afraid to say anything whilst in the grip of the wildly rage she had throwed me into, because you know what a terrible temper I got, Joe, and no gentleman ever insults his own wife no matter how temptin' is the opportunity. So with a shruggin' of the shoulder and a bow which Jeanne taught me herself for use at her parties, I roamed away from there and went into the club's car of the train to write this letter which should reach you, Joe, by the time you're readin' this.

Right here, Joe, I wouldst like to say a word to

the wives whilst I am feelin' in this mood of the outrage husband. In the first place let us take, to wit, the fact that whilst they is hundreds of stories and the like with the point brung out strong that beein' a wife is a tough job and that the bulk of the male race is fiends from below, they is very few in which sympathy for a poor, little husband is featured. If you look around, Joe, you will see that the names of these plays and the etc. is always stuff like, "Married, But Not Even A Wife Yet" and "What Devils Men Is After All" and so on. Now all this here gives the innocent bystanders the idea that once a trustin' young girl gets wed it's the same as if she had became a galley's slave and that all the time a husband ain't workin' he is tryin' to invent new and demoniac ways to torment his wife. Joe, that is quite some distance from the truth. I know personally of two couples which is happily wed and I don't doubt that the Secret Service could dig up a coupla more if gave time and clues and besides in quite a few cases it is no less than the gently wife which gums up the works, often innocently enough and without the malice aforethought. It ain't always the *big* brawls which makes divorce one of our leadin' pastimes, it's the little things like a laugh or a sarcastical remark at the wrong time, too much pep or not enough, or again a total absence of interest in how

friend husband is gettin' the dough which keeps the laughin' hyenas off the front porch year in and year out.

Whilst on this tantalizin' subject, I wouldst further like to say to you this afternoon, my fellow citizenesses, that husbands has a million things to worry about which is spared the actin' head of the house. For the example, there is the one *big* thing of how he is gonna get his wages up to the point where after the weekly bills is paid he is only a coupla hundred berries in the hole and that is some worry these Bullshevik days, I'll tell whatever of the world is left! And then again, wives, think of the way that baby hustled for you before you was wed so's he could make *you* proud of him and how whilst he was doin' said hustlin' you pulled a lotta annoyin' little things which balled him up and made the hustlin' tougher and you know you did that, because that's a newly engaged candidate for a wife's way of showin' she loves the party of the second part. So, wive^s even if the cook did pull a vanishin' act on you in the afternoon, you don't know *what* has vanished on friend husband durin' the course of the day, so forget it and remember that the voice with the grin has never finished worse than first yet. Get real sympathetic and interested in whatever his ideas are, no matter how idiotically they sound to a



ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

“Joe, I wish to state here that gazin’ at those two dames
in the one room is too much for a weak heart”

intelligent woman. Even if he says he's got a scheme to get the steamboat concession for the Sahara Desert, don't get sarcastical—tell him he's a knockout and hustle on the steak, get me?

I hope you wives won't get sore at me for all this, because I am in the reality one of your strongest supporters and not even Henry the 8 thought no more of the female race than I do. In fact, I tried twice to get elected to the Daughters of the Revolution, but it seems I was black balled or the etc.

But to get back to the point, Joe, as the lead pencil remarked, I will show you a case which proves to what the lengths a man will go when he is in the love and for this reason I think a wife should be more lenient, if it can be conveniently done.

This rather unusually romance I am about to let forth, happened whilst me and Jeanne was out in the studio at California, the Land of Wonders, as any railroad folder will tell you. About the second day I become a inmate of the place, I noticed that most of the males therein seemed to have important business in the office about every time they could break away from the muscle wrackin' task of gettin' their picture took. At first I naturally thought, Joe, that they was a hidden Rye mine out there and after my experience

with that boot's leg stuff on the train, I am not only willin' but anxious to stand by the Constitution, so I laid off folleyin' the matter up. Well, when I seen the director himself, which is a teetotaler, go in a coupla times, my curiosity become unmanageable and fin'ly the first chance I got I boldly strode over to the office to stake myself to a peep. I opened the door the conventional inch and inserted a inquirin' eye, Joe.

Sweet Papa!

Joe, they was prob'ly no doubt a thousand little things in that there room to startle the gaze and hold the attention, but the only thing *I* seen was a girl sittin' at a typewriter and I'll say that machine was the luckiest one in the world! Before anybody could put down on paper what she looked like, they would have to excavate Webster and ask him will he kindly add a few thousand more words to the English language. To call her a good looker is like admittin' that they is a wave in the Atlantic Ocean. She was one of them kind of dames, Joe, which when they suddenly appear before the nude eye your heart begins to make frantic attempts to bust through your ribs and as far as your breath is concerned you might as well of checked it with the hat boy. I only seen two like this one so far in my life and the other one is wed to me, but they can't lynch a guy for lookin'

and that's what I was engaged in doin' when this fathead director come along and removes me by hand so's I can appear in a important scene.

Well, Joe, off and on all afternoon I kept castin' a odd thought back to that vision I seen in the office and wonderin' how a dame like that which would of made Napoleon forget about the army ever even got interested in stenography, when Ziegfeld's Follies is only a coupla thousand miles from the coast. Fin'ly when I went to look for Jeanne so's we could go back to our bunglelow together, I found her in that office talkin' to that other girl. Joe, I wish to state here that gazin' at them two dames in the one room is too much for a weak heart, so I waited outside with the greatest of patience 'til Jeanne come out.

"Greetings!" I says, as she steps into the car which the company furnishes us out here accordin' to covenant IV of the treaty we got with 'em, "That girl friend of yours is a cookie, hey what?"

Jeanne ginme a suspiciously look for a instant and then she turns loose that smile of hers which could be hocked anywheres for the Astor estate.

"But yes," she says. "Indeed Mademoiselle Huntington is *charmant*!"

"Aha!" I says. "You *do* know her then, hey?"

"*Mais oui*," says Jeanne, still smilin'. "I have

met her, *cherie*, and I like her much. To-night she dines with us and to-morrow we go ride on the horse back, *n'est ce pas?*”

“You’re gettin’ along great!” I says, very sarcastical. “In a coupla more days you will no doubt be invitin’ her to come back to New York and spend the last three seasons of the year with us. How the so ever, I wouldst like a few details, provided you can spare ’em. You have put all *my* hand picked friends over the jumps and it’s no more than fair that I should get a thumb print sketch of this new pal of yours.”

Jeanne thinks it over for a minute.

“*Eh bien!*” she says fin’ly, pinchin’ my arm. “But you must then promise Jeanne you will nevaire tell!”

“By the mayor of Siam’s left ear,” I says. “I will never speak ’til you gimme permission to release this secret to the trade!”

“*Tres bien!*” she remarks and leans closer and why not.

Well, Joe, I am then treated to one of the most remarkably stories I have heard since I thought Alice in Wonderland was on the level. I’ll never again make the mistake of thinkin’ that the normal movin’ picture is far fetched and couldn’t happen, because I am now convinced that they is many times more sensational things pulled off in

every day life than any sceneryaro writer ever got from beneath his hat. It seems that this Cleopatra of the studio office is no more of a blown in the flask stenographer than I am heir to the thrones of Montenegro. Well, you will holler, what the—what *is* she?

Joe—*she owns the movie company!*

Whilst I am still gaspin' like a hook fish, Jeanne, which hates creatin' a sensation the same as Rockefeller is sick of Standard Oil, lets go the followin'—which I am now free to tell you, scaled of my charmin' wife's French.

Miss Huntington, the apparently stenog, was left this movin' picture company by her dear old father when he passed away and she is a legitimate orphan with nothin' to keep her from dyin' of lonesomeness but a property worth in the vicinity of half a million. After a short whirl around in high society she got sick and tired of the guys which was in the matrimonial draft age, givin' 'em all exemption on the grounds that $\frac{1}{2}$ of 'em was after her bankroll and the other half which had *beaucoup* pennies of their own was too silly to look at across a breakfast table daily. So in order to occupy her mind she makes arrangements to study every department of her company so's to get a line on the movie game and make her half million grow, without nobody knowin' who she really is.

Watchin' all them pictures made every day must of give her delerium tremens, because she claims she is dyin' for a chance to wed a poor, but handsome and ambitious young man and use her dough to put him over. Her dope is that the fact of *her* havin' the bankroll will give her just the amount of superiority which every woman should have over the man in the case and under no circumstances will she consider marryin' a rich man. All day long she is dreamin' of the fairy prince in destitute circumstances comin' along and coppin' her and imagine his delightfully surprise when he thinks he has won a humbly stenographer only to find when it's too late to turn back that he has married a heiress and he can now throw up his job at the bakery, unless he's a half wit or the etc.

Well, I have heard some weird yarns in my time, Joe, but I am forced to admit that one led the league! If it had been any one else but Jeanne which told me it, I wouldn't even consider a proposition to believe it, but I would take my wife's unsupported word that the Panama Canal is composed of sarsaparilla and besides a woman is liable to do anything. Let us take Joan of the Ark for the example.

As advertised, Joe, I met Miss Huntington at chow that night and she come up to all expectations and then went on and passed 'em. She was

even fascinatin' whilst eatin' spaghetti, which is the carbolic acid test.

From then on I begin to take quite a interest in this second Queen of the Shebas, Joe, and naturally enough I devoted some time to wonderin' whom would be the lucky guy to turn up and grab off a knockout like she with a half million for dessert. I didn't have long to wait, because the thing run off like a novel or the etc.

They was a young guy amongst what is known to the inner circle as the "extry people" that fitted in for the heiress victim the same way the skin fits on a olive. He was a good looker in a regular he-man way, he didn't forget that a shave a day keeps the whiskers away and as for bein' poor—well, he was workin' for five bucks a day and worked on the average of four days less than a week. He seen this alleged stenographer the first day he went to draw his ten or fifteen dollars and would of walked out without the money if she hadn't called him back. Jeanne was the only one that noticed that when he fin'ly *did* tear himself away, he left his hat there and she winked at me and grinned.

Well, Joe, I'll say that this super was a fast worker. In fact the kid was so speedy he would of made a telegram look like a paralyzed snail. He hung around that office like a summer cold and

a lot of ambitious assistant directors laid awake manys the night tryin' to figure out ways to send him a box of poisoned bon bons and not get suspected, yet none of 'em had the nerve to fire him because it was a cinch that the lady in the case was partial to him. When he commenced openly callin' on her, Jeanne calls *me* into the thing.

She starts off by convincin' me how she likes this Miss Huntington and then she claims it looks pretty serious between she and this young useless and whilst Jeanne admits the girl's idea of gettin' a husband tailored to measure is kinda queer, she don't want her friend to go wrong. Therefore and to wit, she wants me to mix around with Miss Huntington's boy friend and see if he has anything to recommend him besides his baby stare and the like.

Well, Joe, as I have always been a obedient young man, I folleyed out my instructions to the letters and looked over this bird at close range. I must confess I was a trifle prejudiced against him at the go in, because it was my idea that a guy of his heft should be doin' somethin' more excitin' than being' a super in the movies, but after a scant half hour's conversation I was strong for him, Joe. He was just a big, clear-eyed, clean kid with a certain amount of class that

seemed outa place in the job he had and a some-thin' else about him that it was practically impossible not to like. I didn't wonder that the charmin' heiress with the queer ideas had fell for him and I was only hopin' he would take the advantage of the chance which was headed his way at a mile a minute and make somethin' outa himself and not just lay back and kid the world with Miss Huntington's dough. Havin' promised Jeanne not to upset the beans, I couldn't very well tip him off, but when he come right out in meetin' and told me he expected to wed our charmin' stenog, I figured I might be excused for soundin' him out.

I told him he was lucky, Joe, and I didn't tell no lie!

"You bet I'm lucky!" he says, grinnin' like a wolf, "why you don't know what this will do for me and——"

"Don't kid yourself!" I interrupts. "I know a whole lot better than you do. Now I'll admit that you have gave *me* a good impression and you have got my best wishes for success and the like. But I trust you will get busy and hustle now and can this bein' a movie supe. That ain't gonna get you nowheres and right now you *gotta* make good! Why you can't even start off married life in a unfurnished room with the pennies you're makin'

here and you don't want Miss Huntington to go out and stenog after you're a man and a wife, do you?"

"I should say not!" he laughs. "Ha, ha, the idea of my wife having to work! Really, that's rich! I'm thoroughly capable of supporting her, I assure you. I've managed to get together a few dollars and I'm going to throw up this job of mine to-day and go into a business I've been interested in for some time, and I'll let you in on another secret—Miss Huntington is going to quit too, because to-morrow we get married and Mrs. Harmon and yourself are to be the witnesses!"

Before I could make any answer to this one, Joe, Miss Huntington herself loomed up on the horizon and the comin' luckiest guy on the earth beat it. I walked away with visions of the kid openin' up a frankfurter stand or the like, as what kind of a other business could he open with the dough he saved from bein' a supe, hey, Joe?

I am passin' by the office a hour later, lookin' for Jeanne so's I can make my report, when I hear her voice from the inside. Just as I am on the brink of openin' the door, this young guy begins to speak and I waited.

"No, Mrs. Harmon," he says, in a kinda strange voice. "Please wait!" Then they is a most interestin' (to me) pause. "Edith!" he says,

next, that bein' Miss Huntington's first name, "I have deceived you!"

I hear a gasp from said Edith and Jeanne busts out.

"*Viola!*" she says. "Is it then that you cannot marree Mademoiselle?"

"I would like," he says in a coldly voice, "to see somebody stop me!"

They was at the least two sighs let forth from inside.

"No," goes on the kid, "it isn't that. The surprise I have is a pleasant one. I am not just a poor—er—super. I hung around here because I had nothing else to do and the work was fascinating to me. Also I had a good reason to study the movies. Then when I saw you, Edith, I—I couldn't leave. My uncle, who died last year, left me a little over half a million dollars and I've been looking around ever since for some safe and sane investment. I found it—oh—very recently. You will never have to operate a typewriter again, dear, you can have everything your heart desires. I've put practically every cent I have into this business I've gone into but there's millions to be made out of it and as soon as I can arrange a loan on my new property, I'll probably be able to give you fifty thousand dollars for *pin money*, sweetheart! Now I——"

Then Miss Huntington come to life.

"Why," she gasps, "why didn't you tell me this before?"

"Forgive me, honey," says the kid. "But I—I—wanted to be sure that you loved me for myself, alone."

"That's exactly what I wanted to find out about *you*!" chokes out Miss Huntington, like she was speakin' to herself.

"I don't quite understand," says the kid, kinda puzzled. "You——"

"I—I—deceived you, too!" says friend Edith. "I'm no more a compelled to be a stenographer than you are to be a supernumerary. I—I—" She almost shot the words out, Joe, like she was anxious to get it over with. "I—why I have half a million dollars right now!"

"You—*what*?" hollers the kid.

"My father left me this moving picture company," explains Edith. "But I don't like the movies and never did. My being here at the studio was just a whim of mine. I sold the entire plant through my brokers to-day. I—why what's the matter?"

I heard Jeanne give a little cry so without no more further ado I pushed in the door. The kid has fell into a chair and is shriekin' with laughter. I hadda pound him on the back to bring him around to where he could talk.

"What's the large idea?" I bawls at him.

"The idea—oh yes," he chokes, jumpin' up and puttin' his arms around the kinda dazed Edith.

"The idea is, old man, about the funniest I've ever heard tell of. This moving picture company which my future wife just sold—*is the business I just bought, that's all !*"

I'll say it was enough, hey Joe?

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON (The Strongest
Hope of The Movies).

CHAPTER VIII

THE NIGHTS OF COLOMBUS

EIGHTH INNING

In the Midst of My Den.

DEAR JOE:

Well, Joe, here I am back again in Harmony Hall, my *tres bien* country's estate on the Hudson's River, which not content with bein' beautiful is also gettin' so cold now that I am thinkin' of changin' the name of it to Zero's Palace which would be more appropriate and likewise very uniquely, as the Czecho-Slovaks have it. Joe, a country's home near the water is somethin' wonderful in the summer, but in the winter it's the horse of the other color when we have snow and the etc. to contend with and a hot water's furnace which don't require no more care and attention than a ten minute old baby and can with patience be made to do anything, outside of heat the radiators.

As you may have seen via the newspapers, Joe, the miners was retired on three pitched balls, or

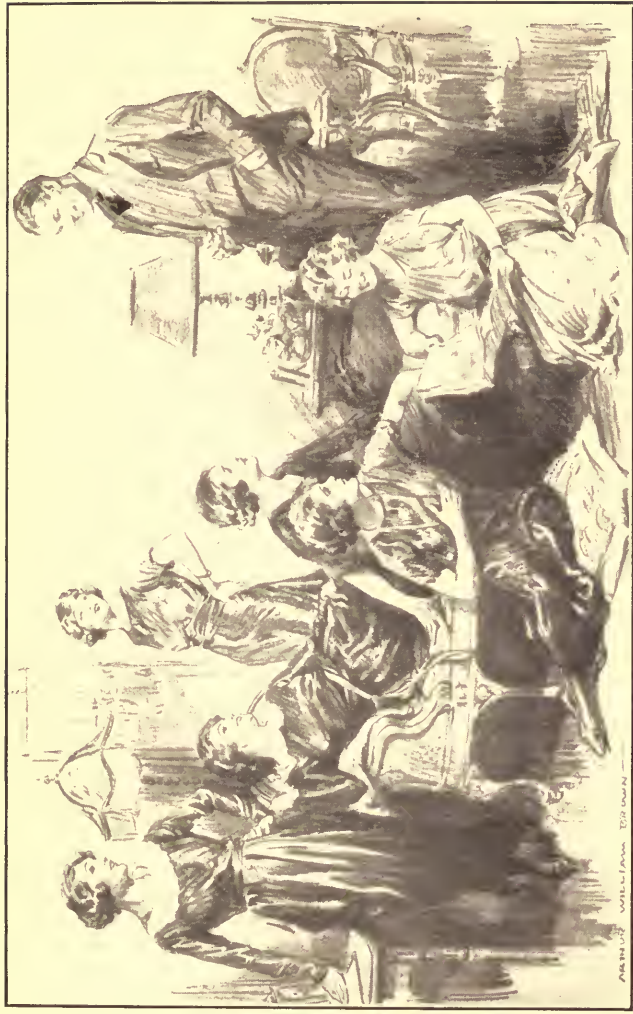
in the other words, went out on strikes with the annoyin'ly results that for quite the while it become as easy to get a scuttle of coal as it is to convince a Russian that the war's all over. What the miners was strikin' for I have no more idea than they have, but I hear it was because they demanded the privelege of wearin' dress suits whilst engaged in their profession and the money grabbin' bosses insisted that the time honoured costume of white flannel trousers with sport shirt, cream coloured gloves and tennis shoes must be wore in the mines whilst the brave lads is on duty. Joe, I have wrote a little ballad with regard to the strikin' miners which I am gonna give them absolutely free if they will get it published and they can sell copies of it to each other whilst waitin' for the coal magnets to give in to their just demands (or just lately demands, as the bosses has it) and all the money which flows in from the sales can go toward outfittin' 'em with sterlin' silver picks.

The name of the song is, for the time bein', "The Battlin' Hims of The Republic" and the chorus goes like thus,

Down in the coal mines, underneath the ground
Diggin' dusky diamonds, all the year round.
We git bigger wages now than we ever did before,
But we might as well strike and make 'em slip us more!

You can easy see, Joe, the beautifully sentiment they is therein and I predict it will win many admirers to the miners' cause. I cannot understand them miners goin' on the strike when Pres. Wilson has told them time and time again that he was extremely not in the favour of it. Where does them guys get off to defy the president? They must think they're either Mexicans or in the U. S. Senate, hey Joe?

But to get away from strikes and the etc., Joe, we are settled here in Harmony Hall for the winter and will not be seen lollin' about in the sands of Palm's Beach or out at California attemptin' to get them movin' picture bathin' girls to try their luck for once with the wildly waves and see what happens, instead of doin' nothin' but gettin' their pictures printed alongside of wrestlers and box fighters in that illustrated booklet without which no barber shop is complete. Joe, Jeanne met a slew of them dames whilst we was temporary inmates of Los Angeles and six of 'em is now stoppin' at my castle on the enroute to Florida, where some pictures showin' 'em at the mercy of the Malays and the etc. is gonna be took. A canned sardine wouldst die of lonesomeness alongside of the jam they is in my house now with all these extry inhabitants, but after the first flash I got at them six bathin' beauties I im-



“I decided to make the best of it as they is nothin’ like bein’ courteously, especially to such knockouts as these dames is”

mediately decided to make the best of it as they is nothin' like bein' courteous, especially to such knockouts as these dames is. I will tell you later Joe, about all the adventures I partook of with them whilst they was guesstin' at my house.

Well when we got back to Harmony Hall after makin' that picture "Heavens Above!" out in Los Angeles, the first thing I done is to go downtown and commence collectin' circulars and folders which deals with the variously resorts down south and the etc., Joe, some of them places is winter resorts and some of them is last resorts, but I figured that anything was better than spendin' from Oct. 1 practically to March 1 in constant attendance at the bedside of my furnace, especially as in *my* cellar they is nothin' but cookin' coal and not no bottles of the liquid extract of the same which is bein' sold now as booze.

Joe, I was particularly in the favor of makin' the voyage to Havana, because Phil Bloom, the honest bookmaker, is down there helpin' to improve the breed of horses and suckers and right before he left he says I wanna be sure and come down this winter, because Havana is some *beau-coup* village since "Swat The Rye!" become popular in the U. S. Well, I asked the gently salesman in the ticket office how about it and he let forth a grin and shakes his head.

"I don't blame you for wantin' to go down there," he says; "I only wish I could breeze down myself, but I couldn't sell you a stateroom inside of the next two months if you was to make me a present of your left lung as a bonus!"

"I don't want no stateroom inside of the next two months," I says, "I want one inside of a scow which is headed for Havana. Can I get that?"

"Nothin' stirrin'!" he says. "Every line is booked solid from now on. I never seen such a demand for boat accommodations in my life!"

"Evidently you must of missed the Johnstown flood then," I says, with a pleasantly snile. "Is they any chance of me goin' a few inches toward fair Cuba by train?"

"Oh, I could route you all right, I guess," he says, "but what good is that? They're sleepin' 36 to the room in the hotels down there now and you'd have to park yourself for the night on top of a awnin' or the like. Besides, where's your passport?"

"That'll be easy," I says. "Now——"

He gave a demonical laugh.

"*Easy*, hey?" he says. "Then it would likewise be easy for you to get a job as a bookkeeper in a Chinese laundry!" He looks around at the ticket rack and speaks to it. "He says it's easy to get a passport to Havana," he tells it, wagglin' his head

from the side to side. Then he turns back to me. "Try and get one!" he says.

"What dy'e figure is the reason for this here biggest rush to Cuba since 1898, hey?" I says, innocent enough.

"Are you tryin' to kid me?" he snorts.

I answered in the anti-affirmative.

"Well then, Stupid," he says, callin' me by a old nickname of mine which it was surprisin' where he heard it. "The U. S. has assassinated Jacques Barleycorn, ain't it? It has also murdered bettin' on the so-called horse races, gamblin' dens is unconstitutional and a movement has just been started to make smokin', chewin' and whistlin' jazz a felony. In about five more years, young feller, this man's country will be in such a state that a New Yorker hot from Broadway which croaked about that time and went to Heaven would complain to St. Peter about the angels playin' their harps after nine o'clock at night! Now strange as it may seem, they is a few lawless citizens left which figures they was put on earth for the purpose of livin' for *a-while* anyways and is willin' to string along with Pat Henry, the guy which moaned 'Gimme liberty—or gimme tickets somewheres where they got it!' In Havana right now they is horse racin', government controlled gamblin', pinch bottle Scotch and all its boy friends—in

fact the place is as loose as ashes and it's only a stone's throw from New York you might say. What's the answer? Why, Cuba is gettin' as much of a play now as a ice water salesman would get in purgatory. If you're figurin' on goin' anywheres this winter you better pick out the North's Pole, or some joint where they ain't such a terrible rush of tourists!"

Well, Joe, I walked out of that ticket's office without as much as a chance remark and wend my way over to the passport bureau with sorrowfully steps. I posolutely refused to believe that they was Americans leavin' their country flat to go to Cuba or anywheres else, simply because things had come to the pass where their personal habits was regulated like they was all feeble minded and the etc. and my idea was that the ticket's salesman was not beneath lettin' forth a occasionally lie, so's to break up the dull afternoons when they is nothin' else to do except tell people they can't under no circumstances go to Havana. I also made up my mind I wouldst come back to that baby in about half a hour and waggle my passport in his face just to show him he was all wrong and the etc.

Joe, I never went back at all, but three hours later I slipped into another joint and got tickets entitlin' me to orchestra seats for Bermuda and the reason I did so is the followin'.

The inside of the passport bureau looked like they was puttin' on a dress rehearsal of a race riot when I got there and it was the best part of a hour before I could even get near a salesman and make my wants heard. I fin'ly hooked and jabbed my way up to the counter and a guy which looks like he's on the brinks of leavin' this world behind from simply exhaustion sneers at me openly and says.

"Well, what do *you* wish?"

Joe, he's lookin' at me like no matter *what* it is I ain't gonna get it and there's *that* !

"I *wish* I was Rockefeller's only heir," I says, with a friendly grin, "but what I come here for is to get a passport for Havana."

"Ha, ha!" he laughs, sarcastically. "If I had one of them I'd use it myself. No chance right now, buddy—keep movin'!"

"What's the idea?" I says. "Is they somebody ahead of me?"

"You tell 'em!" he snarls. "They's 91,000 applications on file here now and they're comin' in at the rate of about three a minute. We wouldn't get to you for a coupla months. The best thing you can do is see America first and forget about that Cuba thing. They can't be no room down in Havana now anyways. We're tryin' to scatter what passports we're issuin' so's they come from

all over. The way these guys which can't stand the taste of water is fleedin' down there now, if we let 'em all go from one section of the country the whole U. S. would tip over on its side in a coupla days!"

Well, that killed the expedition to Cuba, Joe, so after a coupla hours' hard work I managed to get some choice tickets for Bermuda from a speculator and as far as that goes, that joint is a sell out too. I grabbed off a handful of elegant folders which claims that Bermuda is the garden spot of the world and the nearest thing to Heaven it is possible to get on this here earth outside of the Follies, and then I set sail for home. On the ways back, Joe, I could not help smilin' to myself and occasionally for the benefit of the public, when I thought what a pleasantly surprise I had for Jeanne and my baby and how they wouldst no doubt swoon away on account of joy when they heard they was gonna spend the winter under the shelterin' shades of the onion trees and the etc. in Bermuda. I found Jeanne in my baby's boudoir so I wasted no time in beatin' in and about the bushes, but come right out with it.

"Well, Honey," I says, presentin' her with a chastely salute and why not. "You don't have to worry whether they have nothin' but blizzards and forty below the zero up here this winter or not, because I——"

"*Viola !*" she butts in, exhibitin' all her milkish white teeth, "But indeed you are right, *mon Edouard*. That cold shall not bother Jeanne, for I have buy from *Maison Louise* while you are away to-day, *un veston* of the fur. *Tiens ! C'est magnifique* and the cost but——"

"A moment!" I says, staggerin' back under this blow. Can you imagine Jeanne stakin' herself to a fur's coat when I am gonna take her for the winter where that article of ladies' haberdashery will be about as useful as a triple chin? That's what you might refer to as a tough break, hey Joe? Jeanne has beat it outa the room and in a coupla minutes she returns on the inside of what looked to me at the first glance like all the fur in the world, not countin' Shantung. All you could see was her little peaches and Grade A cream face stickin' out over the top with her hair piled up and glistenin' where the light was lucky enough to rest on it for a second and when she twisted up them unequalled warm red lips of hers makin' what is known to the educated French as a *moue* with her mouth and kinda winks one eye as innocent as a infant and as dangerous as dynamite—Well, Joe, I'll say that if all the bears or whatever wildy beasts that coat come from could of seen her, they would of felt satisfied that their fur looked a whole lot better on Jeanne than it ever did on them—and there's *that !*

Well, I stood there like the man in the trance for a minute, thinkin' that come what may this morphine fiend's dream I was lookin' at was my wife and naturally enough the second *that* thought hit me I also remembered that I would have to go bail for this coat and the spell was broken. Unlike Marks & Anthony which was easily affected, Joe, lookin' at beautifully women does not never take my mind completely off of my bankroll.

"To be exact," I says, gettin' set for the worst, "How much did that Esquimaux's dress suit cost you, once they seen you liked it?"

"Poof!" she says. "Almost they make Jeanne the gift of this. It is but *duex mille* of your dollars."

"How d'ye get that way?" I yells. "It'll be do milly of *your* dollars if it's gonna be anything, which I seriously doubt! Two thousand fish for a coat, hey? My name is still Harmon, Jeanne, and not Astor and likewise you ain't dealin' in francs no more, a thing you seem to have completely forgot. Send that coat back to them burglars you got it from, because anyways you ain't gonna need it!"

Jeanne gets a angry though becomin' shade of red.

"Not need it?" she says. "What mean you, Edouard?"

"We're gonna spend the winter in Bermuda," I

says, expectin' her to rend the air with a shriek of delight.

Joe, she stares at me for a minute and then busts out laughin'.

"*Vraiment!*" she says. "But then we are not! We shall most certainly remain here for the winter. Jeanne has enough of those travel for a long, long time. Besides, all next week Mrs. Hedges-Plympton and myself have those historical fête for to benefit that Red Cross. I am to be Queen Isabella of *L'espagnol* and you, *cherie*, are to be—*Viola*, you will never suspect—you will then be Columbus in the pageant! Is that not wonderful?"

"No!" I growls. "What d'ye mean I'm gonna be Columbus? I'm gonna be Ed. Harmon and were *both* gonna Bermuda. I'm off them masquerade balls for life! You had me runnin' wild around here in a set of tights once before, playin' I was a musket's ear of the time of Looey the 14 and I got enough then. That stuff's all silly to me. So you better begin packin' now and——"

Jeanne's eyes gets very coldly.

"Edouard!" she says. "To-morrow afternoon at four o'clock you will be at *Maison Henri* on the Avenue of the Fifth where you will get measure for that costume of Columbus. Jeanne have make all arrangements for you, and——"

“Never mind that end of it—they ain’t gonna be no party at the château Harmon and there’s *that!*” I says. “It’s bad enough like it is with them six bathin’ beauty friends of yours makin’ my home look like a box fighter’s trainin’ camp by goin’ through them settin’ up exercises on the roof every mornin’ and also actin’ like I had adopted them as guests for the rest of their lives. If *I* brung even a merely one of my boy friends up here to spend the week’s end you’d yell murder and yet that California sextette of yours evidently come here with the idea of stayin’ ’til death do us part or the etc.”

“Stop!” says Jeanne. “I will not have my guests criticise. They are *charmant* girls and they shall stay here and keep Jeanne company as long as they so desire. If then you do not like it here, *mon ami*, always you may leave—*n’est ce pas?*”

“*I* may leave?” I yells in a wildly rage. “We’re *all* gonna leave! I ain’t gonna be no Colombus and they ain’t gonna be no blowout for the Red’s Cross tore off here. We’ll give them a hundred bucks and let it go at that—they can buy enough court’s plaster for that amount of jack to last ’em through the next war. I’m goin’ downtown now and get me some Palm’s Beach suits and the rest of that layout which is suitably for the southern climes of Bermuda and I’d advise *you* to do the

same, because that's where you and me is gonna spend the winter. They is no use givin' me a argument about it, Jeanne, because you oughta know by this time that when I make up my mind to do a thing they is no changin' me. I'm boss around here and what I say goes. We leave here next week!"

So that's how it come to the pass that we are gonna stay *here* all winter instead of fleedin' to Bermuda, Joe, and our Red's Cross festival was as big a success as Edison. They was no less than six nights of it and I played Christy Colombus, the *beaucoup* discoverer, as advertised. What I discovered I will tell you in my next *billet doux*, as the French is wonted to remark.

Well, nux vomica and the etc., Joe, 'till we meet again by the via of the mails.

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (I hear this Bermuda joint is a flop, anyways!)

*In My Handsomely Study,
Harmony Hall, N. Y.*

BON AMI JOSE:

Well, Joe, I am sittin' here in the only room which we ain't got a coupla guests parked in, lookin' at the Hudson's River flowin' gaily past beneath my window and it is right now composed

principally of cakes of ice, so I expect any minute to see Eliza and the bloodhounds go caperin' by. It ain't much colder here than it is in Iceland, Joe, and I have been stokin' that so called furnace of mine 'til the insides of my hands is as callous as a loan shark's heart. But I got two consolations, anyways, and that is 1—The Nights of Colombus is all over and 2—The six bathin' beauties is on the enroute to Florida and I can now roam around my own house without bumpin' into absolutely strangers at every step.

As no doubt you are on the brinks of death from curiosity as to the subject of what happened at the fête to aid the benefit of the Red's Cross, I will expose the same without no more further ado. Without violatin' no confidences, Joe, I can tell you that the frolic was a mammoth success, almost \$100,000 was raised by the subscription system for the Red's Cross and a elegantly time was had by all except one guy, viz, ie and to wit, Knockout Hooker, welterweight champion of the world, which will soon have the pleasure of writin' "ex—" before his title, unless I am terribly mistaken.

About three days before Jeanne's extravaganza was gave birth, as we remark in Montenegro, a committee of other husbands and the etc. called on me, Joe, and requested the boon of a audience. Joe, all these guys which has the pleasure of

livin' around me in this section which is as exclusive as a lion's den, has names which sound like a steal from a Pullman's car and likewise has got \$3.75 for every Democrat south of Washington. But most of them is regular guys at that and play a mean poker hand and the etc. so I greet them with gracious indulgence and lead them up to my sanctimonious sanitorium, which is Finnish or the like for private office. Well, first we have a lot of hemmin' and hawin' and flatterin'ly comments on the tasty way I have fixed my room up with pictures of me doin' this and that of a darin' nature both at home and abroad and then a elderly gent comes right out with the main and principal object of the visit.

It seems they is several globules of red blood amongst these guys and as a result they have framed up a card of four or five boxin' bouts for the last night of the party to be held in the gym of the golfin' club. All the guests will be dragged over and shook down for a hundred berries the each to look on and the entire receipts will be flung at the delighted Red's Cross, whether they want it or not. They have dug up a few pretty good boys which has volunteered their services, but what they want for the pieces of resistance is some kind of a champ and a dancin' partner for the same to step about four rounds or the etc.

All they wish *me* to do, Joe, is to furnish the main's bout.

Well, I says I will see what can be done and then with a courtly nod of the head I dismissed them one and all.

The last day of the carnival, bein' relieved of my duties as Colombus, Joe, I secured permission from Jeanne to use the limousine and wend my way down to New York. On the ways I am wilin' away the time by readin' my favourite author, the newspapers, when I see on the sportin' page that Knockout Hooker, the welter champ, is gonna work that very night. He's gonna fight Kid Brennan, the ex-champ, over in Newark. Of course you know, Joe, what Kid Brennan was when he was steppin' fast and also that it is extremely doubtful if the ring will ever see another fighter like *that* baby at his weight. You know how that guy fought 'em all when he was champ and never got bounced 'til he was a decrepit old man. You know that he won his title when prize fighters fought finish fights for a hundred dollar bill with winner take all and worked with four ounce gloves in a *ring*, instead of in dress suits in front of a movie camera. You might have read that in Kid Brennan's 400 brawls his record of one-round knockouts would of tickled even the Marines and he never once kissed the canvas him-

self 'til Knockout Hooker got him when Brennan was old enough to be Hooker's grandpa—and just about that fast.

And of course you know, Joe, that "Brennan" is as much the name of the guy I'm talkin' about as my name is Longfellow!

Well, Joe, my first stop was at a newspaper office and my next stop was at the sportin' editor's desk. I immediately state my wishes to this guy with the result that he calls up Knockout Hooker's manager and asks him will he let his battler, which fought all through the war in a shipyard, give a exhibition of the manly art of assault and battery for the Red's Cross. Then begin a argument which last the best part of a hour and before it was through, Joe, I had twice offered to go over to Newark and fight this box fightin' champ for nothin', myself! Knockout Hooker claimed he had already gave the Red's Cross a buck and had a button to prove it, that he had four fights booked for the next two weeks at a guarantee of \$7,000 a fight and therefore needed a rest and fin'ly, that he had never asked the Red's Cross for nothin' so why should they bother *him*. The sportin' editor grinds his teeth, Joe, but managed to keep what temper he had and shoo me away from the 'phone and by threatenin', kiddin' and pleadin' with this fat-head he manages to get him to agree to step four

rounds for the Red's Cross, provided he got his "expenses," a lotta publicity in the next day's paper and last but not least, that the guy they picked for him to box had to be a eighteen-carat bum as far as scrappin' was concerned. We give in to everything and I says I'll stop over to Newark after Knockout Hooker's fight with Kid Brennan that night and take the champ up to the Red's Cross frolic in my car.

"Woof!" snarls the sportin' editor, bangin' up the 'phone, "Can you tie that bird? No matter *what* happens, I'll give him and that second Jesse James which manages him, a roast in to-morrow's paper that'll take 'em 250 years to live down! Why that big tramp oughta be tickled silly to get a chance to help the Red Cross. He says they never helped *him*, hey? Well is it their fault he ducked the draft and never gave them a chance?"

With that, Joe, he let forth a description of Knockout Hooker's personal characteristics and the like, interruptin' himself now and then to touch on the welter champ's ancestors, the whole makin' a very interestin' collection of facts if you could ever get anybody to print 'em. In the midst of the biography I cut in on him.

"Listen!" I says. "I don't doubt that big stiff is all of that and much more and the chances are I'll take a punch at him myself before the evenin' is

spent. But I gotta work fast! Where am I gonna get a bum to go on with him up there to-night?"

"Oh, that's a cinch!" says the sportin' editor, reachin' for his hat. "Come on—I'll take you over to see Jimmy Dunn. He's got more tramps in his stable than the average village constable sees in a lifetime. After that, I'm goin' over to Newark and see Knockout Hooker murder poor old Kid Brennan. D'ye wanna take me over in that glorified flivver of yours?"

"Not only that," I says, "but if you dig up this *other* box fighter for me, I'll take you all the way up to the Red's Cross carnival as my personally guest. Apart from everything else, they is six California bathin' beauties up there which I can at the least introduce you to. The other guests is a mixture of millionaires and movie stars—the two greatest trades in the world!"

He grins at me like a wolf.

"Sold!" he says. "I'm glad I had brains enough to get shaved on my lunch hour and a man about town is a fool if he ain't got a dress suit at a downtown hotel. I'll accept your invitation with the greatest delight. As a matter of fact, I may get a good yarn outa the thing!"

If it wasn't that I am tryin' to get out of the habit of usin' the expression, Joe, I would remark, viz, "I'll say he *did*!"

Our first port of the call was no less than Monsieur Jimmy Dunn, a manager of itinerant leather pushers. We caught him at a well known (to me) uptown hotel, just as he himself was leavin' for Newark where he was about to challenge the winner of the Knockout Hooker-Kid Brennan fracas on behalf of about twelve of his seventh rate scrappers. The sportin' editor told him what we wanted without no beatin' in and out of the bushes.

"Well, I dunno" says Dunn, scratchin' what was the equivalent of his chin. "I like to help the Knights of the Salvation M. C. A. but I ain't got a boy that could give Knockout Hooker even a good workout! And then——"

"You *must* have a bum on your staff," cuts in the sportin' editor, "or else I have mistook you for somebody else. Any guy will do as long as he's a welter. It's only four rounds for sweet charity's sakes—and they can always take a dive if the champ gets messy!"

Jimmy Dunn gives him a long look.

"All right!" he says, fin'ly. "But remember—I don't want my guy killed, unless you're willin' to advance me sixty bucks that he owes me before we start for the abbatoir. And don't you dare tell him who he's gonna fight—get me?"

"Bring this baby on," says the sportin' editor,

"if he even goes so far as to *feint* Hooker I'll print his picture all over the *Sphere* to-morrow mornin' and make him famous for half a hour!"

Dunn ducks outside and in a coupla minutes he comes back with the prey. The sacrifice wasn't a bad lookin' kid at all and if he wasn't well built, then neither is the rock of Gibraltar. Outside of his nose bein' a little outa true and one ear bearin' a remarkably close resemblance to a Brussels sprout, he was clean and wholesome lookin'.

"Here!" says Dunn, shovin' him over to us, "They's a coupla gents want you to fight for the Joan de Ark statue or somethin' and——"

"It's for the Red Cross," butts in the sportin' editor.

"What's the difference?" says Dunn, kinda impatient and turnin' to the kid. "You ain't gonna get a nickel for this and you'll prob'ly have to pay your own carfare and buy a ticket to git into the club. D'ye wanna fight?"

"Sure!" says the kid, with a cheerfully grin. "Where is this joint?"

"Fair enough!" says the sportin' editor. "I'll show you—and I'll see you don't lose nothin' by this either. Now we're goin' over to see this Hooker-Brennan fight and——"

"So's me and this guy," butts in Dunn. "His

name's Young Kearny. If he only had a fightin' heart he'd be a champ and I'd be as rich as a union plumber. Where dy'e want us to meet you?"

"We'll all go over together," says the sportin' editor, nudgin' me and in another minute, Joe, we're climbin' into my limousine.

Young Kearny starts to get in with us and his manager grabs his arm.

"One side, Stupid!" he grunts. "You ride with the chauffeur—us guys wants to talk!"

"Well," says the sportin' editor, as we're rollin' away. "They's no doubt you gimme what I ordered. He's a bum, all right! Why he don't seem to have the spirit of a female fawn. How d'ye get him in a ring—dope him?"

"Say!" says Dunn. "That kid oughta be welterweight champion right now—get me? He's got a kick like TNT and he can——"

"Listen!" butts in the sportin' editor. "Don't start to fill me fulla hop about that tramp of yours, simply because I'm askin' you to do this for *me*. I'll see that you both get due credit for helpin' the Red Cross, but if you are gettin' set to pull any stuff about how Young Kearny is a——"

"Wait a minute!" says Dunn. "Lemme finish, will you? I don't claim *nothin'* for Kearny, but I think I got the makin's of what you guys calls

copy and if you gimme a chance I'll tell you somethin' that might help fill that rotten column of yours some mornin'."

The sportin' editor grins again.

"Tear it off," he says. "Any time it gets too tough to take, me and my friend can always throw you outa this cab!"

"Well," says Dunn. "In one word, the thing is this—here's a kid which accordin' to all the Marquis of Hoyle's rules oughta be welterweight champion of the whole place. He's knocked out heavies—*heavies*, mind you—in the gym, with the ease that you knock out your wages every Saturday. He strips like Pysike or one of them Italian gods and he could box ten rounds under a rain storm and never git hit by a drop of water. If he's yellah, so was Belgium. Yet he don't git nowheres! Why?"

"The other guys is allowed to come in with a axe in each hand!" guesses the sportin' editor.

"It's a good thing you ain't runnin' the comic page," snarls Dunn, "or the first thing you knowed you'd have to go to work! *I'll* tell you why Kearny ain't a champ—he's been chasin' a dream for two years!"

"I thought they wouldn't let roughnecks in the Follies," says the sportin' editor, lookin' interested. "So they's a girl in the case, hey? Let's see now

—where have I read anything like that before—lately?”

“Aw, shut up!” says Dunn. “Say, wise guy—lemme tell you this in my own way and then you can print it in *your* way to-morrow like you always do, leavin’ out the best of the stuff that’s slipped you. They ain’t no dame mixed up in this at all—the only woman Kearny’s stuck on is his mother. So that’s *one* you lose!”

“I still got some money,” says the sportin’ editor. “Shoot the piece!”

“Right!” says Dunn and Joe, their sportin’ expressions is all Roman to *me* because really you know, them roughnecks has a language of their own. “Now here’s the low down on Kearny—take it or give it to the A. P. This kid is absolutely crazy about—*Kid Brennan!* Accordin’ to him, Brennan is the only box fighter that ever rubbed his feet in resin. I admit and so do you, that when Brennan was right they was no *seven* boys in his class which could even muss his hair. I concede that this Brennan baby will go down in history as one of the greatest scrappers that ever hung another guy over the ropes, but—he’s *through* now and has been for three years! He don’t *mean* nothin’ no more. He’s gone where the woodbine twineth and the like, get me? That’s why this fight of his to-night with Knockout

Hooker is a outrage. It oughta be stopped! Why poor old Brennan will be lucky to last a round—you know that, don't you?"

"I ought to," says the sportin' editor. "I wrote a two column roast of it yesterday!"

"Sure!" says Dunn, "and I don't blame you. But the point I'm gettin' at is this—Kid Brennan is a—a—well, one of them *idol* things to Young Kearny. That boy has got the files of the sportin' annuals for fifteen years back and he knows by heart every fight Brennan was in. Every *fight*? Why he can tell you every punch Brennan *missed* since the old master first climbed through the ropes! He's got a million pictures of Brennan in his room. I've seen him before a lookin' glass the same number of times tryin' to pose in that old style awkward way which they all did in the days when Brennan was a world beater. Young Kearny eats, sleeps, talks, whistles, hums, thinks, and dances Kid Brennan! He gets in the ring and tries to pose in front of these tough kids the way Brennan did when *boxin'* was never thought of in a prize ring. The result is that some third rate bum beats him up where if he'd ever cut loose he'd knock the other guy, the referee and the ticket taker with the one wallop! The fact that Brennan has come and gone means nothin' in Kearny's young life. To him, Kid Brennan to-day is the

greatest fighter the world's ever seen. If you don't believe it, mention Brennan to him. He'll never give *you* no chance to talk, because he'll butt right in with some fight Brennan had in 1905 with Cyclone Williams or somebody and give you every round, *punch by punch!* Why he swore to me that the only reason he ever took up box fightin' himself was so's he could be a guy like Kid Brennan, that poor old battered up has-been!"

"What's Young Kearny done for *himself* so far?" asks the sportin' editor, after a minute.

"I can't even lie about it," grunts Dunn. "*Nothin'!* And say—here's another laugh. He ducked me a coupla weeks ago when Brennan was trainin' for his own assassination to-night. Sure! Young Kearny went over to Brennan's camp and asked to be took on as a sparrin' partner—so's he could for once get a close up of Brennan, he told me. Well, they give him a chance. The minute he stood up before Brennan for the first time, the guy he'd been born and raised on you might say, he went into a trance and Brennan knocked him kickin' with a punch my five year old baby could of blocked. Then they throwed him out on his ear and Brennan himself told him he'd never **make** a fighter—because he was *yellah!* Can you imagine that? That's why I don't want you guys to tell him who he's gonna box for the

Knights of the Pythias, or whatever it is, to-night. If he thought he was gonna fight Knockout Hooker he'd never go near the buildin'! I wanna take him over to Newark first and let him see Kid Brennan, which is his religion you might say, get murdered and that will kill *that* part of it forever. Then I'll rush him up and let him box the champ. I don't care whether he gets plastered or not, because I'm about set to turn him loose anyways. I've blowed a lotta jack on that guy—and I'm through!"

Well, Joe, we rode along for quite a while without no remarks from nobody. Then the sportin' editor borrehs a pencil from me and commences writin' on the backs of some letters he chanced to have in his pocket. Fin'ly he says to Young Kearny's amiable manager.

"Suppose Kearny refuses to go on at this Red Cross benefit when he finds he's up against Knockout Hooker?"

"If he don't go on," snarls Dunn, "you'll git a *real* story—because I'll brain him with the bucket!"

We mill our way into the fight club at Newark, Joe, just as the main bout is bein' announced. Immediately a guy in a box back of us whispers, "Three to one Brennan don't stay the limit!"

"I got it!" hollers Young Kearny, draggin' out a ten dollar bill which could of easily stood a trip to any good laundry.

"You're crazy, you boob!" hisses his manager.

"Forget it!" remarks Kearny, "I only wisht I had a million to bet at the same odds. Kid Brennan will murder this guy!"

Then the bell rung.

Joe, let us draw the veil on what followed. All I remember is more noise than they was at the Marne and nearly as much action. Knockout Hooker was a young and ambitious man which swung a mean right. Kid Brennan was game—and that's all! Long before the referee yielded to the majority and stopped the fight, *I* had got enough and I seen Château-Thierry. The champ simply battered the grand old man from pillar to post, hittin' him with everything but the gate receipts, and it was stopped in the second round to save Knockout Hooker from goin' to the chair for premeditated murder.

Well, Joe, the champ bowed to the bughouse mob, leaped over the ropes and skipped to his dressin' room where he had a engagement with me practically immediately. The crowd filed out, still keepin' up the noise and pretty soon me and the sportin' editor and Young Kearny and his manager was alone. Alone, Joe, except that over in a corner of that bloody ring sat a guy which at one time had set these same kinda crowds crazy and *now* they don't even slip him a back-

ward glance. Even his seconds has beat it somewheres and as the lights here and there begins to go out, a hanger on is moppin' off Kid Brennan's face with a dirty towel. Such is life in the prize ring, Joe—and everywheres else! It was Young Kearny's manager that yanked me aways from my thoughts.

"Well, there's *that!*" he bellers in Kearny's ear. "Are you satisfied *now* that Kid Brennan is through?"

Young Kearny starts like somebody had walloped him.

"Through *hell!*" he says, "Brennan stalled so's he could git another date with this Hooker baby and grab the *big* money. Knockout Hooker never seen the day he could trim Brennan! Why——"

"Aw come on—less git outa here!" bawls his manager, "I'm about fill up on you and Brennan. You can see now where folleyin' that guy has got *you*, you boneheaded tramp! I can ——"

But, Joe, they ain't no Young Kearny to talk to. He has climbed through the ropes and is standin' in the middle of the ring lookin' at Brennan, which is just about gettin' to where he can recognize close relatives. At this point Knockout Hooker's manager comes up.

"Git your bum and let's git up to that Red Cross thing!" he says to the sportin' editor, "I

can't keep my boy up all night. Say—is they any chanct of gittin' a drink up there?"

"Shut up—you!" snaps the sportin' editor, grabbin' my arm and not even lookin' at him, "Come on!" he says to me. "This is gonna be good!" and with that, Joe, he pulls me into the ring.

We're on Young Kearny's heels when he shuffles up to the once great Brennan and stands there twiddlin' his thumbs and lickin' his lips like a kid up before the principal for bein' late for school. Brennan is lookin' down at the floor, Joe, still more or less dazed and all the company he's got is the bucket and a towel. And once a English king congratulated him for knockin' a English champ cold!

Tough, hey Joe?

"Mister Brennan," stammers Young Kearny suddenly, like he was addressin' the Court of Special Sessions, charged with burnin' the orphan asylum and had been caught with a can of gasoline and a torch, "Mister Brennan—I—guess you don't remember me, but—ah—it seems that—as a matter of fact I do a little scrappin' myself. I—well—I'm Young Kearny—I mean I fight under that name and—to be exact my real name is Anthony H. Pizzaro—and I—I'm awful sorry that guy outlucked you to-night,

but I know you'll knock him for a goal the next time!"

Brennan slowly looks up, turnin' that butchered face of his into the calcium that was still lit over the ring, Joe, and I must say I have seen easier faces to look at. This here Knockout Hooker had certainly did a workmanlike job! First Kid Brennan don't seem to see anything but the empty seats and the fact that he's all by himself. Then he slowly looks up at Kearny, whilst that young gentleman looks like he would fain vanish through the floor, as a result of him havin' the nerve to *speak* to Brennan.

"Thanks, Tony!" he whispers fin'ly through his puffed lips, stickin' out his hand. "Yeh—I know you. I seen you work and you're a good boy, too. Hooker fouled me, or I would of knocked him dead in another punch!"

Kearny takes the hand—tries to speak and can't and then his manager hustles him outa the ring, Joe, and also outa the life of Kid Brennan.

Of course even I, which knows little of the prize fightin', am wise to the fact that Kid Brennan's alibi about the foul thing was idiotical. He was licked to a fare-thee-well by a younger and better man—and there's *that*! But the effect of him talkin' to Young Kearny was remarkable. This kid walks outa the club like a guy in a trance—

his eyes is shinin' and he's mutterin' to himself. Suddenly he swings around and straightens up.

"Say—did you hear him?" he says. "He called me Tony—Kid Brennan shook my hand and called me *Tony*! Pretty poor, eh?"

"Aw shut up, you boob!" snarls his manager, as we climbed into the car again. "Forget about Brennan. You'll prob'ly have a guy countin' over *you* in another hour!"

Young Kearny settles back in the cushions and sighs.

"Let's see now," he murmurs, speakin' directly to himself, "I walked up and I says, 'Mister Brennan, I feel sorry' and Kid Brennan says, 'Well, Tony——'"

Dunn let forth a coupla choice oaths and throwed the lap robe at him.

Knockout Hooker and his manager folleyed us in their own car all the way up to the Red's Cross carnival, Joe, and we went straight to the golfin' club gym which was jammed to the doors with the creams of society, both the male and female. The six bathin' beauties, still in their California movie costumes, was in a box the rest of which was filled with guys which from all the attention they was payin' to the ring they could of been a knittin' bee goin' on in there instead of a box fight.

"Who's this guy I'm gonna fight, hey?" scowls

the ferociously Hooker, whilst gettin' into his ring's costume in the dressin' room.

"Young Kearny," I says. "I guess he won't give you no trouble and——"

"You *guess*, hey?" he snarls. "I'll let that tramp stay about two rounds and then you can git the shutter ready to carry him out. I gotta git to bed early to-night!"

Joe, he certainly was a tough lookin' baby when disrobed and I must say I felt sorry for Young Kearny. I made up my mind I wouldst stop it the minute the goin' got too messy for the boy.

The crowd had been put on edge by a coupla preliminary bouts, one of which had wound up by a knockout and when Hooker and Young Kearny stepped into the ring they was gave a cheer which would of satisfied Dempsey. I got quite a pleasantly surprise when Young Kearny throwed off his bathrobe, because no matter whether he was a *beaucoup* mauler or not, he certainly looked like four aces to me. The way them arm and shoulder muscles rolled and rippled under his skin was very comfortin'.

His manager and the sportin' editor is in his corner. I'm refereein' the thing.

"If this kid puts up any kind of an argument at all," remarks the sportin' editor, "I'll give him a

column boost in the mornin'. I'd part with my left ear to see him stay the limit!"

"Your ears is safe!" says Kearny's manager. "When he realizes he's been throwed in there against the welterweight champ, he won't have brains enough left to put his hands up. It ain't bein' yellah—it's nerves! Now if——"

Young Kearny has gazed across the ring and scen Knockout Hooker. He gets pale and turns on his manager.

"What's the idea, hey?" he whispers. "I can't do nothin' with that guy—he'll about murder me! Does the Red Cross have to see a execution to-night?"

"What did I tell you?" sneers his manager to us. "Why that——"

"Shut up!" bawls the sportin' editor. He hops into the ring and leans over the kid.

"Go in there and kill that tramp, Kearny!" he says. "If you even make a fair showin' I'll force him to give you a fight for the title and even if you lose *that* one, think of the jack you'll drag down! Hooker's nothin' but a lucky false alarm and you know it. And remember—he's the guy that beat up Kid Brennan to-night, the greatest fighter that ever lived!"

Kearny's eyes flashes a little, Joe, and then he licks his lips.

"I dunno," he says, shakin' his head. "He's a terrible tough baby, Hooker is. He *must* be good—he's the champ, ain't he?"

Then the bell rang.

Kearny was very slow gettin' to the centre of the ring, Joe, and he was white faced and as nervous as a cat. Knockout Hooker met him with a snarlin' rush that carried 'em both to the ropes, but Kearny managed to fight himself free and land a feeble left to the champ's face. The chance wallop seemed to get Hooker's goat, or maybe it was the crowd yellin'—(Bankers and brokers can get as excited as longshoremen, Joe—you oughta see the stock exchange) at any rate, he works his man over to the middle of the ring and with a evilly smile on his face begins to deliberately hook and chop him to pieces. It looked to me like he could of bounced Kearny at any time, but he didn't wanna do that—he wanted to cut him up first to show the crowd what a dude he was with his hands. In less than two minutes, Kearny's face is one big bloody bruise and they was only one eye available for seein' with. The ladies begin to yell "Stop it!" and I stepped over to do that thing when Hooker begin to talk to Kearny.

"You're a fine tramp!" he sneers, choppin' the raw face in front of him with a wicked jab. "Who ever give *you* the idea you could fight, hey?"

"Kid Brennan!" pants Kearny, the one good eye glarin' at Hooker like a searchlight.

Hooker bust right out laughin' and actually dropped his hands for a second.

"Kid Brennan?" he shrieks. "That poor old cripple I pushed over to-night, hey? That's rich!" He hooks a left flush to Kearny's jaw. "Kid Brennan" he snarls. "Well you and him sells for a dime the set. *That bum!*"

"*Bum?*" roars Kearny, straightenin' up, "Kid Brennan a *bum?* Why you big——"

Joe, I was just gonna tap Hooker on the shoulder and send him to his corner when it happened. Kearny whipped over a nasty left to the startled Hooker's chin and whilst the champ's knees was still saggin', the kid crosses with his right and Knockout Hooker was sleepin' peacefully when I counted—"ten and out!"

When Knockout Hooker come to life and was engaged in askin' was they many killed when the roof fell in, the sportin' editor, Young Kearny and his half hysterical manager is standin' over him. The sportin' editor leans down.

"And furthermore, you bum," he growls in Hooker's face, "I'll hound you in my paper 'til you give Kearny a real fight for the title—I only wish you guys had been made to weigh in before this bout and Kearny'd be champion now!" He

winks at me and turns to Young Kearny. "Kid Brennan himself couldn't of done a better job when he was at his best!" he says.

Young Kearny throws back his shoulders, grins and looks at the welterweight champ bein' carried to his corner.

"Hell!" he says, in a different voice than I ever had heard him use, Joe, "I think *I* could of licked *Brennan* the best day he ever seen!"

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON (Deputy Sheriff
of Shantung).

CHAPTER IX

THE LEAGUE OF RELATIONS

NINTH INNING

*In the Midst of My Cellar,
Harmony Hall, N. Y*

DEAR AND ETC. JOSEPH:

Well, Joe, no doubt you will gasp with surprise when you see I am writin' this in my cellar, but I am not down here for the reasons that you prob'ly think, which is that I have gone to work and laid in a stock of the Keeley Cure antidote since prohibition become the latest state to join the union. As you know, I at no time was a hound for the demoniac rum, only takin' a few seidels of Scotch or the like now and then rather than offend a friend or the etc. Also when the ratification epidemic ravaged the country I made up my mind I would start right in to shun the saloons instead of waitin' 'til the doors of the same was slammed in my face. But of course if a guy finds himself to be dissatisfied with the liquid conditions in the United States at the present he can go to the countries of Rhode Island or New Jersey, both of

which has taken the stand that you can lead a man to water but you cannot make him drink it, except as a chaser.

The real reason that I am writin' this letter down in the cellar amongst the coal and bottles of grape juice with the conventional three raisins and a yeast cake inside of them, is because I have now become a valet to my furnace which I have taken the liberty of namin' Bombardier Wells after the English heavyweight, on account of it always goin' out. This forty dollar the week chauffeur which we need the same way I need a third ear, claims he was hired as a engineer and not as a fireman and if he wanted to shovel coal for a livin' he never would of wasted his time goin' to night school, and the two maids simply give vent to hysterically laughter when I gently inquired would they look after the furnace. So bein' faced with a mutiny on all sides, Joe, with the winter in the full sway and it bein' as hard to get help here as it would be to get frost bitten in Southern Hades, they is nothin' left for me to do but go down in the cellar several times a day and mingle with the ashes and the etc.

Joe, if a man is born to be a coal heaver he might as well be one and be done with it, because they is no use tryin' to dodge your destination as Napoleon had the habit of remarkin', unless of course

let us take Germany for the example where some years ago a guy which was born for the ash heap was made kaiser but is now occupyin' his proper position and here only a short while ago them guys elected a president which was born a saddlemaker and so far he can hardly tell the difference.

Now here in the U. S., Joe, it don't matter what stations of life you manage to get born in, because a poor man has the same chance as a well fixed millionaire and both is equal in the eyes of their fellow citizens—the minute they are dead. If you will devote some attention to the newspapers you will see pretty near every day where some guy which has lucked his way to the top of the heap tells the world just how he was able to raise himself from bein' valet to the cows, pigs and chickens away out west in Philadelphia or some of our other farmin' lands at \$7.50 the year, to bein' now commander in chief of the Insipid Succotash Foundry at \$500,000 a week, outside of commissions. Joe, in case they is no newspapers available, I will tell you how all them articles reads, because I have made somethin' of a study of them in a effort to find out if they wasn't *one* of them guys at the least which had climbed to success that started life with a college education, moderately fixed parents, a lotta influential friends and a good salary. But, Joe, after readin' the confessions of about 1,000 of

our great men I am convinced that all the things I have just mentioned is a terrible handicap to a youth which is startin' out to take the universe and make it like it. It seems that all the education any of them successes ever had was barely enough to tell how much is 1 and 2, all their parents was so poor that the first time they seen the almshouse they thought it was Buckin'ham Palace, they went through hardships which would make a voyage to the North's Pole seem like a stroll through Central Park, nobody ever helped them with as much as a pleasant grin and fin'ly, through gettin' up to hustle at 3.30 A. M. in the mornin's and studyin' the Lives of the Saints at nights instead of wilin' away the golden hours at stud poker, they arrived at the top. Joe, none of them guys has any hesitation about comin' right out with all that stuff whether they done it or not, so I would suggest if you wanna get over, you better quit whatever you are doin' for a livin' now and get a job somewheres as a street cleaner or the like to start and in no time at all you will prob'ly have a bankroll which will make Rockefeller and Morgan go around moanin' and gnashin' their teeth.

I am a hopeless case myself and have no chance to get anywheres, because I went as far as the sixth grade in school instead of not goin' near the joint at all and also my parents was fairly well off and I

never had to work in no stable or nothin', so you can see my chances was killed at the start, hey Joe?

Well, to get away from all this which only goes to show I am gettin' old and the etc. when I commence to hand around advice, Xmas has came and went, Joe, and it has left me as usually without the price of a sunburn in the Sara Desert. It's a good thing that the Yuletide is all settled in one day and ain't a World's Series or I would step right from the festively board into the poorhouse. As it is, I will be in hock for about six months payin' installment collectors for the various gifts I lavished on my so called friends and my undoubtedly wife and family. All I got back for my investment was a belt from Phil Bloom which looks very suspiciously like the one I gave him last Xmas with the buckle shined up and I wish now I had marked it last year. They was also four ties come by the via of the mail and if I ever get crazy enough to wear any one of 'em I will have to put dimmers on it or the public will go blind. I got at the least 200 cards which says on 'em "Wishin' You A Jovial Xmas and A Elegant New Years" and which don't mean nothin', because the only guy which ever got anything by the via of *wishin'* was a young feller by the name of Aladdin.

Joe, I give Jeanne, for the example, a diamond

broach pin which every stone in it is so full of fire and life you could take it in a dark room and read with it, not that we have to and in return she give me a china set of dishes to go in the show case which adorns the diner of our mutual castle. I will no doubt have a lot of rare sport these long winter nights playin' house with them dishes and I expect the doll which goes with the set to arrive at any minute.

However, Joe, although I didn't grab off enough presents to have to hire no Burns detectives to watch 'em, my baby present me with a smokin' jacket which has got four more colours in it than I ever knowed existed. As he is somethin' under three years old, I think it was really a remarkably thing for him to walk downtown by himself, sneakin' away no doubt whilst Jeanne wasn't lookin' and pick me out this jacket. He must of done that, Joe, because they was a card come with it which says, ie, "To Father—From Little Wilson." Now, Joe, when you figure the age of my baby is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ years in the round numbers and then stop to consider that he went out and bought that smokin' jacket all by himself and on the top of that feat was able to write the card that went with it, you will see that he is *some* infant and when he grows up will no doubt be the sensation of Wall Street at the least. Now as to the

smokin' jacket itself, I ain't quite figured out how to smoke it as yet, but it is prob'ly to be cut up and used in a pipe in the lew of tobacco and from the perfume of the average pipe I am positive that smokin' jackets must be the fuel used therein.

Eddie Stevens, which don't believe Colombus discovered America because he wasn't there to see it, claims I am crazy when I tell him what my baby done and he says the child's mother prob'ly procured me the gift but had it fixed up to seem the other way on account of how cute it looks. Well, you can see that is nothin' but professional jealousy, Joe, because Eddie is a father himself and they ain't no half dozen of his kids has got brains enough to equip a gnat, hey Joe?

I have not yet gave up all hope with regard to the Xmas presents due me, because I figure that the bulk of the people which enjoyed my generosity had no idea I wouldst recall them around Dec. 25 and they are now dashin' madly around tryin' to pick up things here and there for me which cost at the least within \$5 of what I gave them. I have done the same things manys the time myself, Joe. Let us take for the example, last year when Shorty Wells come through at the twelfth hour with a cigarette container for me and I had to hop out in the middle of the night, you might say, and purchase him a shirt, explainin' the delay by

sayin' they had forgot to put in the stripes and I had to wait for them.

Well, Joe, they was one Xmas present I got from my beautifully wife which I will recall for some time, as it come near havin' the both of us make the acquaintance of the divorce lawyers, a thing I have always try to avoid. This gift was delivered a coupla weeks before Xmas and was as much of a surprise to me as the Anti-Saloon League was to the bartenders' union and also, Joe, I am in the position to say that it was the same kind of a surprise.

The present was imported from France and was in the shape of Jeanne's family on her mother's and father's side.

Joe, one mornin' I was peacefully dreamin' of the various things a successfully movin' picture hero like me will select to dream of and I was just in the midst of sternly wavin' aside the charmin'ly princess which craved to wed me, the while remarkin' like they did in the times of Looney the 14, "What the ho, my lady. Od's blood, s'death and whoops my dear! Strike me pink, but my heart is anothers!" and things was breakin' like that for me in this dream, Joe, when I was woke up by somebody shakin' my shoulder from the one side to the other. As the result of this, in no time at all my head banged up against the

side of the bed and I leaped to a sittin' position and let forth the followin' whilst I waved a imaginary sword, which is the kind that Congress give me for what I done in France.

"Zounds and the etc., varlet! Unhand me or the chances is I'll run you through, Oh yea the verily!"

Joe, the night before I had read words to that effect to the accompaniment of eatin' Welch's Rabbit in a book called, "On Account of Monte Cristo." Well, with that I open two of my eyes and there is Jeanne bendin' over me and laughin'. If they is anything prettier than Jeanne in the mornin' or whilst we are on the subject, in the afternoon or evenin' either, Joe, then so far I have missed it!

"Edouard!" she says, still gigglin', "What then means those strange language to Jeanne?"

By that time, Joe, I was fully awake and a glance around the room showed me I was safe in my own home and not battlin' with a bevy of gay musket's cars or the like.

"What's the idea of wakin' me when I was in the midst of bein' the hero of a historically romance?" I says.

"Arise!" says Jeanne. "I have for you the delightful surprise. Ah, *oui*!"

Joe, I prepared for the worst. Whenever a woman says she has got a pleasant surprise for

you, watch your step! I'll lay eight to five that Salome told John the Baptist she had a pleasant surprise for him right before she demanded his head for a watch fob.

"What has happened now?" I says, leapin' from the bed. "Don't tell me they is anything wrong with my baby!"

"*Mon Dieu!*" remarks Jeanne, a flash of ivory tintin' the rose of her cheeks. "Always you think of the most horrible thing. Little Wilson is safe, but you must dress quickly for we have to go at once to the river!"

"Where d'ye get that *we* stuff?" I says, still in the clutches of the amazement.

Her answer is to dash to the 'phone and order the car at the door in ten minutes. Then she rushes into the bath's room, turns on the water and hurls my bath's robe at me.

"Hurry!" she says. "We have but an hour to get to the boat."

"Say listen!" I asks. "Would you mind givin' me a faintly idea of what this boat and river stuff is all about?"

Well, Joe, at that Jeanne comes over and places a arm around my manly neck. Then she releases a smile which as usually makes me dizzy and says.

"*Avec plaisir!* We go to that pier and meet *le vapeur*—what you call the steamer from Bor-

deaux. Did not Jeanne say she have the surprise for you?"

Joe, I begin to fear for the worst!

"Who is comin' on this boat, hey?" I says, kinda weak.

Jeanne keeps that smile in high and her face lights all up.

"*Mon famille*," she answers. "*Le pere, le mere, le frere, le sere !*"

"Never mind the song," I says, "and try to speak a occasional word of English, will you? That pere le mere stuff don't mean nothin' to me. Who are we gonna greet?"

"*Parfait !*" she remarks. "It is then my mother, my father, my brother, my sister and Toto arrive to-day. Now, is not the surprise *charmant?*"

I get what is known as aghast, Joe, and sink back on the bed with a moan. For a long time Jeanne had been threatenin' to bring her family over here, but I had always been able to stall her off before by either gifts or threats of reprisals and this here come like a shower of bricks from the clear sky.

"Who is Toto?" I says, the minute I am able to speak at all. "Your aunt?"

"*Viola !*" says Jeanne. "*Non, non, non, non !* Toto is *le chien*."

"What the—what in the name of North Dakota is a *chien*?" I gasps.

"A dog—stupid," says Jeanne. "Hurry then, your bath will be cold."

"I ain't thinkin' about no bath now," I says. "This here's very serious to *me*. I thought you would be the last one on earth to double cross me, Jeanne and yet the first time my back is turned you go to work and drag your family over here! Just what is they figurin' on doin' in America?"

"Oh, but it will be *charmant*," she says, claspin' her hands. "They are going to come and live with us forever!"

At that I let forth one wildly yell and fell back flat on the bed, coverin' my head with the bath's robe so's to stifle up my moans!

"Come!" says Jeanne, shakin' me. "We must be quick or we will miss those boat!"

"I wish your family had missed it!" I hollers. "You must have got the idea that you're wed to J. P. Morgan—I can't afford to keep all them relatives and that *chien* thing of yours. Send 'em to a hotel or the Salvation's Army and be done with it!"

"They shall stay here, Edouard," says Jeanne, very stern, "and you should feel honoured that my family have consent to be your guests."

"Yeh?" I says. "Well, get *this*—Harmony

Hall was meant for my home and not no road house. They's enough of your family here right now, the same bein' you, which is just the correct amount. They can come up and stay a coupla days at the outside and then you will have to make arrangements to park them somewheres else for the winter and there's that!"

I don't like to be harshly with my charmin' wife, Joe, but they is nothin' like bein' firm and be done with it, otherwise a spouse loses what little respect she has for you the minute she finds she can twist her lord and master around her thumb. As a rule I usually give in to what Jeanne wishes, but this here was one matter I was determined to have done *my* way, because sooner or later a husband has got to put his feet down, hey Joe?

So that is how it come to the pass that Jeanne's family and the *chien* (le dog) took up headquarters in my house and the indications is they will be here 'til the formerly Crown's Prince of Germany gets elected mayor of London by acclamation. I am nearly crazy, Joe, from listenin' to all this jabberin' in French day and night and of course I don't know whether they're all knockin' me or not. I have decided to kill the *chien* at my earliest convenience on account of the fact that I have got to take it out for the airin's every mornin' and evenin'.

I hope you had a merry Xmas and got the \$7.50 cigar's cutter I sent you. The scratches on the side of it don't amount to nothin' and more than likely was done in the mail. I got your Xmas postal card on time and it certainly was nice of you to remember me like that, Joe, though of course it is a gift I will not have to be bothered lockin' up in the safe every night or anything like that, hey?

Well, so long, Joe, I have got to go upstairs now and drag that *chien* around in the snow and if it as much as lets forth a sarcastical bark at me I will assassinate it!

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (The Well
Known Host).

On the Banks of the Hudson Far Away.

Bon Ami JOE:

Well, Joseph old dear and all that sort of rot, as we remark in London, I am the happiest guy in the world not countin' Lenox Avenue, because my family-in-the-law has pulled up the stakes and departed for Europe and I am once more the reignin' monarch in my own home. My charmin' wife's league of relations includin' the *chien* (le dog) found that a few days at Harmony Hall was about all

they could take and how they come to leave makes a delightfully story full of human interest and the etc. which would be worthy of the typewriter of a Elinore Glynn. I will endeavour to tell you the thing in my own inimical way, because Joe, this is the last letter you will get from me for a long space of time. In the last two years I have wrote you more letters than the State Department sent Mexico and instead of treatin' them in confidence you have gone to work and had them printed so's all the world can see them and read all about my most intimately doin's and the like.

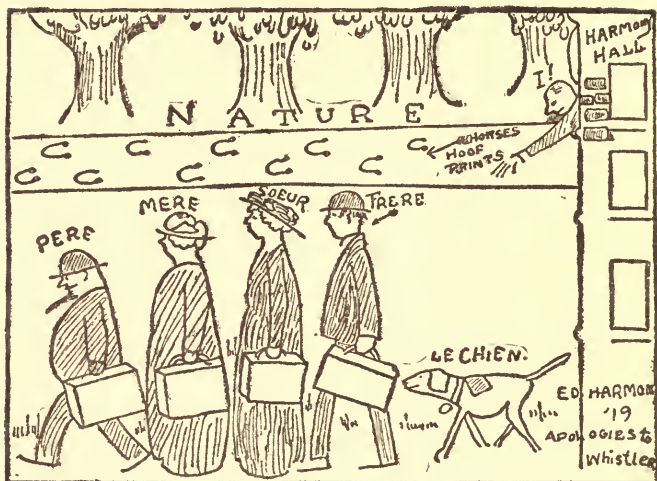
Also, Joe, whilst we are on the subject, who is this Arthur William & Brown which you have allowed to draw imaginery pictures of me and Jeanne and my baby? Where does that guy get off to leave out the dimple in my chin and how much jack is you and this Brown party splittin' for these letters of mine, hey? It looks like to me as if I am bein' trimmed all around and made to like it. If you only had brains enough to let me know you had to have pictures to go with my letters, why I could of supplied all of them at a price which I feel certain would be lower than you must of paid for callin' in a stranger.

You may not be aware of the facts that I am looked on as somethin' of the painter, myself, Joe and they is at the least a dozen corpuscles of

artists' blood coursing through my veins. My first cousin Jules Tish swung a mean whitewash brush in his day and my uncle made his living by being handy with a piece of chalk. Of course he did most of his drawing on the sides of freight cars and he was down on the payroll under the heading of a "checker," but he would of no doubt made a name for himself if it wasn't for the scarcity of models for the particular stuff he drew. The majority of his works, Joe, was called "86 X48. Sealed. O. K." and it is hard to get models to pose for that, hey?

But to get back to the point, Joe, I have taken the liberty of drawing a illustration for this letter to show, viz., my wife's family leaving Harmony Hall to go back to those dear France. This is a ring-side sketch, Joe, and whilst it might be a trifle rough in spots, you must remember that I had but two scant weeks to devote to it and toward the end I had to depend entirely on memory. You ought to be able to get this Arthur William & Brown to retouch it up a little and if you can use it I will let you have it for exactly what the materials I used cost me. I can have this done in olive oil or the watery colours whichever you prefer at a slightly additional cost and whilst the painting may be a little rough, as I say, you can see that the talent is there.

Well, Joe, here is the paintin'.



You can see from my drawin' that it would only be a matter of a few days of hard study, Joe, before I wouldst be able to make these guys like Arthur William & Brown, Rube Goldberg and this promisin' recruit, Mike the Angelo, look like a merely novice but why should I take the bread and butter out of their mouth? I believe a man should stick to his own game and live and let live, hey Joe?

But to get away from the arts for a second, I will tell you about the reign of terror which I had to put up with at my home durin' the epidemic of my wife's relations and also how the scourge was

wiped out by the simple use of diplomacy. Joe, I used to think a diplomat was a rich guy which the president sent to South Algeria so's to get the pest out of ear shot, but now I know different since I tried my hand at diplomattin' myself. A diplomat, Joe, is a guy which let us take for the example, ie, he is at a ball and he sees a woman guest which from her looks wouldst be safe anywheres and he turns to his male tête-à-tête and remarks. "What a terrible looker that dame is, hey?" and his vis-à-vis then says. "That's my sister!" Well, the average guy would be dumfounded, Joe, but the diplomat lets forth a pleasantly smile and says, "Pardon me, old man—I thought it was my wife!" Thus easin' the strains of a delicate situation.

Well, Jeanne and me went down to the pier and welcomed her family after they got through attendin' the informal reception which the customs guys give them and then they all piled into the car. First they was a kissin' bee and the only one which didn't osculate me was the *chien* (le dog). He gimme a longin' look at that, but I would of brained the intelligent animal if it had took a step toward me so he content himself with a couple of insultin' barks. Jeanne refused to grant me the boon of ridin' outside with the chauffeur, with the result that all the ways up I had to undergo the

torture of a barrage of French which would make the Tower of Babel sound like a deaf and dumb class asleep.

I devoted my time on the trip up, Joe, to thinkin' of ways and means to get rid of my charmin' bride's relatives without havin' to face no jury as a result of my endeavours, but I guess bein' in the movies has deadened my allowance of brains and by the time we reached the portals of my home I was still in what is known as a quandry. I had plenty of time though to look over the lay-out and I see the followin'; First, my wife's father is a aged man which must of made a solemn vow in childhood that he would never under no circumstances allow a razor to be plied over his chin and up to the time I met him he had successfully resisted all attempts to wean him away from his oath; Second, my mother-in-the-law has evidently fell in love with Fatty Arbuckle's figure and is determined to duplicate it come what may; Third, my brother-in-the-law is filled with the idea that the subject of the war has been let drop too quick and therefor he wears a uneyform to remind the innocent bystander of it and not content with that he is all decorated up with medals like Sousa's Band or the etc., and Fourth, my sister-in-the-law is one of the prettiest girls you, me or anybody else ever seen—outside of Jeanne. As for

the *chien* (le dog), the less said the better. It is what is knowed to the trade as a French poodle, Joe, and apart from that it is the weirdest lookin' animal I ever seen in my life since the time I got gassed and delerious.

Well, we fin'ly arrived at the mansion and first we have a sight-seein' trip over Harmony Hall with Jeanne as lecturer and me as deputy guide. As a result of the jaunt around the place I seen two rooms I never knowed we had before and then comes blow number one. My mother-in-the-law gets infatuated with my personally boudoir and claims she wouldn't consider sleepin' nowheres else and in spite of the fact that I wig wagged Jeanne behind her back 'til I rip the seam in my coat sleeve, Jeanne immediately bequeaths her the room. I controlled myself with the greatest of difficulty, Joe, when my wife stakes my brother-in-the-law to a set of my best pajamas which was gave me by Phil Bloom on my most recent birthday and to change the subject I went out and brung in my baby.

The minute I come in the room, my mother-in-the-law presented me with one terrible look and then commence to holler murder in French about the way I am holdin' the child. To the accompaniment of some shoulder shakin' which would make Bee Palmer and Gilda Gray go out and take

carbolic, Joe, my own legally child is snatched away from me and whilst I am still boilin' with the honest rage I happen to glance around and see my brother-in-the-law grabbin' off a handful of some imported Turkish cigarettes (advt) which come to me by the via of a Xmas present from Steve Eller, the last of the bartenders.

Joe, by this time I am the logical candidate for the straight jacket and Jeanne is payin' the same amount of attention to me that a elephant lavishes on a flea. Then comes the last straws which bust the camel's hump. My sister-in-the-law, which has been devotin' the majority of her time to pettin' the *chien*, grants me the boon of a critical gaze and then turns to Jeanne and tears off a coupla yards of French. This is translated to me practically immediately, Joe, and the gist of the thing is that I have got to take Toto, *le chien*, out for a airin'.

Before I know what I am doin' Jeanne has throwed my fur's coat around me and pushed me out into the snow with this infernally *chien* on a string and the instructions not to come back for a hour. I am so frantically mad that I would of been willin' to take on a mountain's lion at catch-weights and stake the lion to the first coupla falls. I drag this *chien* hithers and yon oft in the stilly night and the first time it started to bark I growled

at it so ferociously that it quit cold and devoted itself to whinin' and tryin' to hide in the snow. Well, Joe, I am walkin' along keepin' my lonely vigil, as Hamlet was often heard to remark, and thinkin' of my cruel fate when I all but bump into another guy which is likewise at the one end of a chain that has a dog at the other end. Of course from that I can immediately see that he is a husband, Joe, and we both size each other up without sayin' nothin', but each hopin' the other would break up the ice and speak. Fin'ly he looks at me and gives vent to a cough.

"Fine animal you got there," he says. "French poodle, hey?"

"Yeh," I says. "And I'll make you a gift of it right now if you are inclined to dogs!"

Well, Joe, he laughs.

"I know just how you feel," he says, "and you ain't got nothin' on me. I have got to take this here Pomeranian out twice a day so's we can have a little peace in the family. I been doin' this for a year, but believe me, to-night is the last night! I am gettin' sick and tired of bein' a governess for a dog and when I bring this beagle in this evenin' I'm gonna declare myself. Either me or the frankfurter goes! Am I right or wrong?"

Well, Joe, that was just what I was lookin' for

and in another minute me and this guy is as thick as glue on account of our havin' the common bond of bein' exercise boys for a coupla dogs. I suppose we must of talked for the best part of the hour and when we parted it was impossible to wring another drop outa the flask he carried for medicinal purposes. Also we both swore a oath to go home and get a showdown on the question of canines from our prospective wives.

Marie, the imported maid, meets me at the door. I am pale and cool, Joe, with the most deadly calm. I remember feelin' the same way the first time we went up to the front a coupla years ago. Come what may I have made up my mind that the league of relations must go! I immediately adopt my second lieutenant's manner.

"Send Mrs. Harmon here at once—snap into it!" I barks at Marie.

She gimme a startled look and beat it.

Joe, I have made up my mind just what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna hurl Jeanne's family out in the snow for a starter and then——

And then, Joe, Jeanne comes out. I must of squandered more time than I thought with this other dog guy, because she is in evenin's clothes and they is sounds of revelry within. She gimme one searchin' look and then, Joe, she bestows a chastely salute on my forehead, standin' on her

toes and with her face very flushed and the like.

"Edouard," she says, still with her arms around me and why not. "I have the delightful surprises for you. I——"

"Hey, listen!" I says. "I am fed up with them delightfully surprise of yours and this last one you pulled will do me for some time. Now that family of yours has——"

"They leave on the very next steamer," says Jeanne. "They will not stay here now because—because—Edouard, you will never guess!"

"Shoot!" I says. "I can't stand no more suspense."

"*Viola!*" says Jeanne, with a giggle. "They have just learn of this—what you call prohibition and—well they cannot have those wine with the dinner, then poof—they go back to France! *N'est ce pas?*"

Joe, I come near swoonin' with simple joy. 'Three rousin' cheers for prohibition, hey?

"Kill me whilst I'm happy!" I hollers. "Now what's the other surprise?"

Joe, Jeanne gets colours that the rainbow never seen. She reaches up and puts her mouth close to my shell like ear.

"Well—what is it?" I says.

"Edouard——" whispers Jeanne, "We——"

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Joe, you big stiff—why don't you get wed?
Hey—get *this*—I'm gonna be to another father!

Yours Truly,

ED. HARMON (I hope it's a girl Joe, be-
cause that will just make up the set!)

THE END



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